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WALKS IN THE WOODS:

(A REDDEN REVIVAL IN A "SINGING SCHE.")

BY WILLIAM ROSS WALLACE.

Dead on their frames stalks are Autumn's flowers,
But all the weeds have been in brilliant bloom;
With glowing wrinkles the parks are over-sanded;
The golden-rod is yellow—the dwarf sumach
The purified flush lower over scarlet, ash,
Maple and oak, in every rainbow hue,
Full flaring by the ground.

O who the loss
Of summer's roses would lament, could he
Forever wander at his own grand will
Mid Autumn's beauty and magnificence?
Nature in all the vigor of her prime,
And beautiful as when, both tender as glorious
As this bright efflorescence of decay!

How sweetly silence all the many sounds!
The leaves, death-stricken, seem embalmed
By Winter for her readiness for all
Her beautiful children gone.

But thou now!
That feathered sprite, the spotted woodpecker,
Makes sweep free, for you, a mellow drum:
A murmurous, teeming sound the pigeons make
At their long feast of luscious acorns spread
By liberal Autumn, and the squirrels hold
A jubilee.

Where on the pensive soul
Find happier place for thought than Autumn's Face?
It is for self-communing greatly built,
And deepest meditation. Let its trend
Those solemn altitudes and majestic aisles
In huge-eyed wonder and hushed reverence,
And their Almighty Architect adore
As we behold them clothed as with the pomp
Of radiant summer in the Autumn of the year.

THE WHITE TERROR.

ELIZA A. DUPUY

AUTHOR OF "THE LOST ISRAEL," "THE HUGUENOT MAIDEN," ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER VI.

Adrienne followed Eudy across a wide gallery, and passed before the door of the lady's tower, while the figure selected a key from the large bunch she carried in her pocket. She thrust it into the disused lock with a harsh, grating sound, and after several efforts succeeded in turning it.

The door at length unclosed, and they stepped into an apartment three sides of which were octagonal, while the fourth one was filled up by a large armoire built against the wall, and an alcove in a line with it filled up by a bed. The furniture was of the same style as that in the lower room, covered with faded damask, though here it had once been rose-colored.

The alcove was draped with lace curtains, and above them was a cornice of carved work representing a basket of flowers, while by a pair of crimpled Loves which seemed to float above, sustained by their expanded wings. A large mirror, extending from the floor to the ceiling, occupied the space between two of the windows, and opposite to this was placed a dressing-stand, with an oval glass which confined the occupant of the room to view her whole figure when in full toilette.

A few pictures were upon the walls, mostly representing mountain scenery, which had probably been gathered from this country; they differed to the fat country in which Madame Lecour had passed the latter portion of her life.

A small carpet, an article of great luxury at this time in the colony, lay in front of the small fire-place; it had been woven in France, in imitation of Gobelin tapestry, and the arabesque pattern, in which the most gorgeous colors were contrasted, was now faded and worn.

The curtains of rose damask were held back by carved water lilies, and the room occupied looked with surprise on a degree of elegance she had not expected to find in so new a country. She expressed something of this, and Eudy promptly replied:

"De 'plendishe' o' dis 'portunet were bring from France when de maids were so many as de mens belongs. She chose 'em in Paris herself, an' a vessel what b'longed to her father bring her back dem thousand, wid all de t'ings she had bought wi' de money dat nebber was put away when she returned to de 'sland."

"Did you live with your mistress in those days, Eudy?"

"No, 'deed, I wishes I had. I b'longs to the mystery, what 'sheriff for he age nor de woman arter he married de rich Madame Mendon. I only come to live wi' her jest 'fore she was 'ported."

"Deported? where to?" asked Adrienne.

"If she died, you use a strange form of speech."

"Hi! 'deed, now, you ain't seen to sign her talk, or you'd a' know'd dat I meant to tell you of her death. Yes, de angels come for her, but dey can't hold her so fast but she can come to me sometimes."

The old woman ominously shook her head, and Adrienne apprehensively asked:

"Do you really believe that the spirits of the dead can return to us? Oh, do not tell me that this room is haunted by its former occupant, for I shall fear to remain in it."

"Oh, for, chile! you needn't get so white, for, de de White Terror don' come in here. She had too much trouble in de room to make her willin' to come back to it."

"The White Terror," repeated Adrienne, faintly. "Then my grandfather was not justified, and the house is really haunted."

"Don't get frighted, young miletz, care she ain't gone to come arter you. She only come when she walks in, for she lived ther in happiness wi' de husban' her father married her to. Dis was her 'portunet when she was married to your grandfather, and de life she led wi' Ann wasn't sich as would make her come back to de places where dey was together."

"Did he treat her badly?" asked Adrienne, with an irrepressible desire to learn something more of Madame Lecour's history. Eudy shook her head, and replied almost in a whisper:

"Take my 'vice, young miletz, an' don' ax no questions 'bout your gran'pa. He nought find it out, an' you 'member what he said to you jes' soon."

The young girl colored at this rebuff, and Eudy crossed the room and unclosed the wide doors of the armoire. On one side it was filled with shelves, but the opposite one, in place of having the same supply of books for suspending ladies' dresses, revealed a plain door with a small steel knob communicating with a spring. The old woman touched this, and the door flew back, revealing a dark, narrow stairway, leading evidently to the room below.

"It were a whim of de misfis dat de steps shouldn't be seen, an' she thought dis contrivance very clever. Dere is a slidin' panel in de wall o' de lower room, wi' a knob like dis one, so you can always get through when you chooses to go down stairs. In misfis's day a lamp used to hang dere, but you'll have to get along wid out dat 'commodation, case de master keeps so much light hisself, he don't 'low much to other people."

Adrienne looked into the dark abyss that seemed to open at her feet, and with a shiver said:

"I believe I shall keep this doorway closed, and use the staircase leading from the gallery. I would rather walk in the open air than to go through such a dreary, musty-looking place as that."

"I 'spect you'll change your mind afore you've bin here very long," replied Eudy, significantly. "Your gran'pa sist fond o' new faces, an' one day he'll hardly be able to keep from him to bring him his victles, fond as he is of smilin' o' 'em. I know'd dat 'twas you de minit I see his head in his stirrups an' rages 'round like a mad creetur, an' I 'membered dem."

"Good heavens! is Mr. Lecour really subject to attacks of madness? If he is, I shall assume a fool safe beneath the same roof with him."

Eudy impressively replied:

"If you has any other place to go to, I'd 'vise you not to stay in dis ole dismal house, care you'll die o' de blue devilsh of gran'pa keeps de master's furies, though I don't 'tactly consider he him out o' his mind, only a little cracked in de upper story, an' de green stuff he chews makes him kind o' wild sometimes, an' he does strange things."

Adrienne listened to this account with a sinking heart. Here she must remain, for she had no other refuge on earth. She was friendless, homeless, and could claim no other shelter beneath that offered her by this singular man, and she felt how impossible it was for her to claim the hospitality of Madame Cesnal, even if she were to leave her present asylum, for the fiction that Adolphe would specially ask her to become his wife. Before they parted, Madame Cesnal had lovingly blessed her as a daughter, and her own willingness to waive all considerations of fortune, and accept her as Mr. Mendon's choice.

The young girl felt grateful for their kindness, yet there seemed to her to be a motive lurking behind it which she was unable to fathom. Added first by the many acts of unlimited portionen of Mademoiselle Durand, on entering into connection with Mr. Mendon, this mother and son seemed to be inspired with the warmest interest in her fate. They repeatedly questioned her about her early recollections, and the circumstances which led to her being placed in a convent to be educated. Adrienne answered them frankly, but the peculiar delications were connected with the convent, for she had long thought that her father had died there before her perceptive faculties came into exercise.

She had always been told that her mother died when she was in her third year, and it was the wish of her only surviving relative that she should assume the veil when she attained a suitable age.

Her new friends listened with absorbing interest. They consulted together, discussed probabilities known to themselves, and finally insisted that the young traveller should not throw herself on the protection of Mr. Lecour, but accompany Madame Cesnal to her own residence. Thus her future fate would be at their hands, but the refusal of Adrienne to accept the proffered hospitality of Madame Cesnal, withheld plans.

And no other attachment existed, Adrienne would have felt it to be impossible to give her hand to Mr. Mendon. He was twenty years her age, and by no means attractive to her. She respected him, felt grateful to him for the service he rendered her, but in her estimation love was something too precious to be given in exchange for hands and gold. He had thought to tempt her with the description of the stately home in which he had dwelt with his first wife in the island of Jamaica, of which she was a native, and hinted that he could afford to keep a second chaise, and if destitute of fortune herself, in the same splendor that had surrounded his lost Sylvia. Then he dwelt on the secluded and monotonous existence she must lead with her eccentric grandfather, but Adrienne listened unmoved in her purpose; she was free from conventual restraint, and she could bear a few months of isolation, with the hospital hopes in a new young heart that her lover would remain true to her; she would win a place in the heart of the old man, whose life she hoped to brighten, and in time he must lend a favorable ear to their attachment. From his great wealth he would portion her, and in good time they could be united.

These were but the dreams of hopeful youth, and already she beheld them vanishing before the grim reality presented by Mr. Lecour's appearance and manner. All that now remained, was to bear the cross, which in her self-humility assumed with as much patience as she could muster, and in her solitude she would endeavor to have faith in the future, for a few months might open to her a pathway in which she could walk with Victor by her side, and contented love within her heart.

Thus dreaming, she followed Eudy from side to side, as she opened drawers and cabinets, and showed her the elegant articles which had been collected by her mistress; and carefully stored away by herself but days or dawn should lighten them. Among them were exquisite china ornaments, some elaborately representing the most complex of the most celebrated statues of antiquity, and several cameos, carved with delicate skill. A case filled with a collection of medals, and a portfolio containing a number of fine drawings by Madame Lecour herself, were deeply interesting to Adrienne, as affording some insight to the pursuits of her predecessor in that apartment.

"Now I'm glad to show you somethin' real grand," said Eudy. "But you must' neber hint to my master dat you's seen 'em; case he'd fairly take my head off for 'sistin' on dat sich t'ings, 'cause he 'spise 'em so much."

"Then it will be better perhaps, for you not to show them at all," suggested Adrienne.

The old woman sturdily replied:

"It won't do any harm as I knows on, an' you may as well see 'em as not. Fust, I'll 'tend to look 'em once in a while myself, for dey's fadous.

With great solemnity, she looked over a bunch of keys, and selecting one of a prettier shape, inserted it in the lock of an antique, inlaid cabinet. The doors flew open, and Adrienne saw jewel cases with their lids lifted, and their glittering contents exposed to view. A magnificent parure of diamonds flashed back the light from the candelabra on the table, and the dark velvet of the next; but the most attractive was a box filled with pearls, which shone with the light of the sun as it streamed upon them, and momentarily kindle to a deeper splendor as their fiery hearts received new fuel from the day beams.

The young girl eagerly stretched forth her hand to lift them from their bed, but the negress withheld her.

"No, young miletz, you mustn't tech 'em, for de madame placed 'em dere wi' her own han' de day afore.—Well,—nebber mind when—but dey's jes' as she left 'em down out o' her white fingers, an' it seems to me dat I can see her lily han' flitterin' over 'em as I sees her put 'em away for de last time."

"What, I see nothing," said Adrienne with a shiver, for she was completely unnerved, and took the assertion of the old woman as a literal fact.

"Oh chile, I jes' see it in my mem'ry, dat's all."

Adrienne drew a long breath, and pointing to a deep drawer in the lower part of the cabinet, asked:

"What is kept in there?"

Eudy replied by unlocking the drawer, and displaying folds of silk and lace, followed by linen, and want of one. She took out a bridal robe, and held it up.

"Dis were worn wi' de diamon's, when de Madame married to please her father. Dow was grow' dow's den, for de ole man had sot his heart on de match, an' as he' wanded her inter it."

It was point lace, looped with orange blossoms, now crushed and faded. Eudy then took out a plain white silk with no ornament whatever—but worn on—

"Dis were de one when she give her hand to my present marster, an' I'm 'tole dat de fire stones yonder was all de ornyment' she put on. Ill I tell dey showed de fiery trials she had to pass through wi' him."

Adrienne was also a third dress of plain muslin, with only a few knots of white ribbon. Eudy dolefully sighed it, as she said:

"I never knowed what dis were worn for, but I 'spects de pride went wi' it; for I's 'em de Madame shed tears 'nuff over it to make a basket o' 'em. Dere was some mighty sorrerful 'mumstances b'longing to dis dress, I's sure, but I never knowed what day was."

"And what is in that small yellow bundle?" asked the inquisitive stranger, who had become vividly interested in all these details.

"Ah dat have always been a mistry to me. Dey's a woman—complete old en 'em, wi' lace an' all kinds o' dainty work; but to my knowledge de misfis never had a child o' her own. I don' 'no why she'd keep de clo' belongin' to other people's chil'ren 'mong her most precious perssessions. You—dat am a mistry I can't get at no how."

With a feeling of super interest for which she could not account, Adrienne lifted the bundle and unrolled it. A complete suit of infant's wearing apparel appeared, which had evidently been made at home, and the loving care with which it had been prepared was evinced by the dainty needle work, and fine materials used.

With a sudden thrill of emotion, the young girl looked over these tiny memorials of a young mother's care and tenderness, and warm tears sprang to her eyes. A whole history of maternal hope, joy, and fond anxiety arose before her fancy. As she rolled them together again, a strange, electric shiver ran through her frame, thrilling every fibre of her being, and arousing that latent providence which was the gift of her impressible organization. In spite of her efforts to keep them open, her eye-lids drooped, and a singular torpor fell upon her; a ballet-robe she then thought it.

She looked as in a vision, two women kneeling beside the couch of a sleeping infant. Both were weeping, and one was clad in deep mourning. Their hands were clasped together, but suddenly the one who seemed in the greatest distress, drew the hand of her companion over the face of the child, and seemed to be exacting from her a promise. With many tears and caresses, she lifted the slumbering babe, and placing it in the arms of her companion, then buried her own face in the pillow on which the dear head had lately rested, her whole frame seeming convulsed with anguish.

The voice of Eudy aroused Adrienne from her momentary trance, and her wandering senses returned to find the bundle plucked from her grasp, and the old woman in a great flight exclaiming:

"I clar to Moses! young miletz, I hope you aint subject to fits, for I thought you was a fit; an' later ons over these here ole yaller duds. What makes you look so white? Do the meek I put 'mong 'em make you sick?"

Perhaps it was that vivid which so singularly affected me," replied, anxious to find some natural cause for the sudden plunge of an inner power hitherto unsuspected by herself. Adrienne had often been told of persons possessed by evil spirits, and she had given implicit credence to the tales whose truth was vouched for by those in whose truth and piety she possessed entire confidence. With modern fear, she asked herself if she had become one of those accursed ones, by forsaking the holy home in which she had been carefully reared? The mere thought filled her with superstitious dread, and she felt a sense of relief when Eudy closed the cabinet, and said:

"I spec' you is tired now, an' would like to res' a bit. De room is damp an' cool, an' I'll send my ole man up wi' a candull o' wood to make you a fire."

"Thank you; but it is a long time till night, and I had rather go with you to your part of the house."

The old woman looked keenly at her.

"I 'spec you aint afraid to stay up stairs in broad daylight chile, care of you is, de 'fore' only knows what is to become of you in de long dark nights."

"I am not afraid—I am only restless, and I have a natural desire to explore the house in which I am to live hereafter."

"I'm sorry for you, honey, of you has to stay here long. It's bad 'well for Pierre an' me, indeed only as you couldn't be no mo'safe ole place. We t'ings to de master, an' sum' do his will, but ain't a blessin' young creetur as you, ought to have somebody what is willin' to take you out o' dis, an' make you happy in your own way."

A faint smile crept to Adrienne's lip as the soothing thought came that there was one who would leave no means untried to save her from a prolonged residence beneath that housed roof. She did not choose to take Eudy into her confidence, and merely saying:

"I cannot leave myself here for the present," she motioned to the old woman to precede her down the dark and unknown staircase. It proved to be sufficiently wide and easy of descent, and the spring which held the panel below, at once obeyed the touch that had so long been familiar with it. At the request of Eudy, the young girl tried it herself and found that she could easily manage it.

A stanza of Proserpine was placed in front of the opening, and slightly sweeping, Adrienne followed into the lower apartment.

Glad to have found a listener, the garrulous old woman chatted away:

"Dere's dis grand' dom's in de house, but is nebber used any time. I's only been 'tole on 'em, for I were bring here only jes' afore de Madame died, an' I were sick a-bed a good 'nuff day for us all. But what is de matter of you? I 'spects I'll have to call Pierre to help me 'tend."

As Adrienne crossed the dark stain upon the floor, that sinew thrill again pierced her being, and she shrank aside, faint and pale, with a sickening dread she had no power to conquer. She pointed to the floor, and whispered:

"What is it? Was a murder done upon it?"

The negress turned of an ashen hue, and she visibly trembled, though she affected a laugh, as she replied:

"Why, you makin' all' dis pother 'bout a cup o' spilled coffee dat I forgot to wash off de floor. It's 'markable beautiful, young miletz, for you'll go 'wild in dis queer ole place."

"I believe I am half wild now—let us get out of this room, there is a feeling of death in it. I cannot be beheld a sanguinary scene—and, oh, there is blood—blood upon the block!"

The old woman looked with a wild stare upon the fixed pallid features, the heavy drooping eyelids, and, unconscious of her words, dropped her head, as she replied:

"What is it? You mus' 'member dat you's in de world dis is de queer ole place."

"Oh, I wish I had never left my country gifted with second sight, had entered this house, so gloomily guarded from the prying eyes of the world, that its dreary secrets might be kept from the knowledge of man.

Had she been sent hither to unveil them? to be the instrument to bring the old tyrant, who lived in his tower as a tiger in his den, for the crimes of his whole life, to justice? With a sudden sense of justice, hoped it might be so, for she felt that the spirit which cried aloud for vengeance. She dared not speak herself, for she feared her mother's curse would fall on her head, but she knew that one would yet be found who would possess the courage to denounce him. Then she recollected that this young girl could scarcely be less than a century in the grave, and therefore bound to protect him against the consequences of his evil deeds so far as by her power, and she abandoned the dawning hope that right might be done through the instrument of the last of a family.

Adrienne shivered with fear as the conclusion of this newly developed purpose flashed within her. She asked herself for what purpose it had been given? Was it for evil or for good? She tried to reason with herself—to prove to her own satisfaction that the uncertainty of her reception by Mr. Lecour, which had so long lain in her heart, was for mind—not sentiment—and which had deprived her of appetite, and the dispelling reverie of the days—had given a sudden tendency to her mind. With a good night's rest her nerves would be restored to a healthy and natural equilibrium, and she would then clearly see that an excitable imagination was only playing fantastic tricks upon her, which her native good sense must combie her to control.

Resolute to banish the phantasm which had so thrilled her inmost being, Adrienne followed Eudy across the lower gallery into the body of the house. It did not seem to have been built on any architectural plan, but as if room after

[ENTERED ACCORDING TO ACT OF CONGRESS, IN THE YEAR 1861, BY ROBERT BONNER, IN THE CLERK'S OFFICE OF THE DISTRICT COURT FOR THE SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF NEW YORK.]

room had been added as the need for them arose. Such, in fact, had been the origin of the old manorial residence on which it had been modelled: for in his desire to reproduce the home of his boyhood, Mr. Monbrail had ignored convenience. With such materials as were at his command, he had built a chateau with winding corridors, badly ventilated rooms, and antique towers; but the wood and plaster had had been forced to use, in place of stable and friend, were already falling to decay, and, wearing as wreaths an appearance as a castle of the feudal ages might have done in a climate less damp and variable.

Badly unlocked door after door, revealing sumptuous furniture, now faded and musty with disuse; but the absence of dust showed that the old woman was not unfaithful to the trust reposed in her. Adrienne walked through it all as one in a vague dream, and she scarcely heard the incessant chattering of the old woman. She presently asked:

"Why did Madame Lecour give up there fine rooms, and prefer the tower to live in?"

Rady shook her head:

"She took a dislike to dese 'partments arter de death of her husbiks an' father. She were a fanciful kind o' lady, an' as she had plenty o' money, she up an' she pleased. But to me, de great house wasn't given up to de vermin—she filled it with company, an' she 'joyed herself, frolickin' an' dancin' never was learn tell of in dis country. De Madame was a mighty gay widder, I 'lowed."

And how did she live after her union with Mr. Lecour?"

"Ah, chile, as soon as he came in possession all de rest was a-stop to. 'Is his tale he allers was a stranger man; but how he presented a gay young widder like de Madame Lecour, I'm sure nobody could understan': de servants thought he bewitched her; you know, honey, dat 'stonishment is fools 'nuff to 'llvere in rich things. Howsomedever, let dat be a 'tell, she married him, though all her frien's was scandalized 'bout it, an' de Madame family threatened to prove she was cruisin't be in her right mind. You see, de estate was hers, to do as she pleased wi', an' she didn't want her to marry again."

"But has any particular objection to Mr. Lecour?"

"Well, I reckin dey had, for he were a stranger in dese parts, an' too ole by twenty year for de Madame. But dey says, de whole part of de trouble make, dat de Madame seemed unhappy in de thought o' marryin' him, yet she thought all her friens to be dead set."

"It is indeed a singular history; and they were not happy together, I am afraid."

"Happy? Oh, Lor'! I don't 'spec' she ever thought o' such a thing wi' him. He up an' go house, sold her carriage, an' put de horses in de place. Sended every single one o' dem fus', an' when she were left to his mercy, he 'mused herself in one room, an' made her stay in de other. She bore it, you see, cause she had braved de anger of her frien's to marry him, an' she had a agersh o' her own, dat made her willin' to bear de consequences without sich'ation. But de master sent all de ole servants away, an' bought my ole man an' me, wi' our dumb chile, what didn't live very long arterwards."

And you were with Madame Lecour when she died?" asked Adrienne.

A singular expression flitted over the face of the old woman, and she replied:

"Oh, sir—actilly—actilly—I were wi' her, for I loved her—loved her, for she were a good lady, an' what seems singl'er to me, you looks mighty like her."

"So Mr. Menden thought," said Adrienne, musingly. "Yet I am in no way related to her. But why are you turning from this door? Let us enter this room, if you please."

"It aint no use, for dey's only lumber rooms, an' you'd only git your fingers all black wi' de dust. Dere's nothin' in dar but a passel o' ole iron an' rust wot lookin' at."

Adrienne looked steadily at her; she said:

"Across the gulf to the highest bank from this door, I believe?"

"Yes, dat am a fac', but dey's only lumber rooms in dere."

"Something tells me that you are deceiving me, for symptoms of your—you—and I will not insist on seeing those rooms at present. The time will come when I shall—when I must see Mr. Lecour's consent."

The old woman's voice trembled, as she asked:

"Is you *possess*, young miste, dat you talk in dis circumlocular style? I'd'ere I'll 'xpress myself to lunatic dat will coo from us bobs."

Adrienne hastily smiled back, then, under the sign of the cross in the air, and turned away without further reference to the unopened doors. She was glad to follow Rady into the open air, and shut off the gloomy impressions made by the solitude and desolation amid which she had been wandering.

Rady opened an outer door, which led into a vegetable garden kept in order by the labor of Pierre. Her own domicile fronted this, and near it bloomed a few hardy flowers of such gaudy hues as are most prized by the class to which she belonged. A poultry yard was in the rear of the cabin, swarming with fowls, turkeys and geese. These Rady displayed with great pride, commenting upon their different characteristics with much shrewdness.

"Chickens are giddy things, young miste; what never thinks o' nothin' haplyin' to 'em, tell half de head 'vering off, an' dey runs an' flutters 'bout in a state o' surprise tell de blood's mos' let de body."

Adrienne shivered, and vaguely muttered:

"I would give much to know if circumstances is left in the body while these convulsions go on, and the victim of the shock feel the pangs of mortality after the knife had done its work?"

"Ask like, an' maybe de can tell you," said Rady, quite significantly in the direction of Mr. Lecour's tower. "If you could see what is in de dark room under her's, you'd think dey could."

"What is in there then?"

"Only platers o' people, but dey's deathly to look at; all on 'em has had dere heads cut off, an' you can see what de knife went 'roun'. He don't know dat I's seen 'em, but I has. Sich 'bout dese feahs; you know people allers says 'dey won't 'spress' when say can have dere own mighty silly thing; but it's my 'pinion dey orter say what is turkey, for dey's orth been seen an' dey can't take care o' dere own young once, but carries 'em into all manner o' unsuitable places. But de grease—lor' love you, chile, dey is as wise as wille fishes; you allers has to look out when dey goes to sleep, an' dey shows de judgment o' human sometimes—but it's de Moses dey does."

Adrienne half smiled, as she replied:

"Your observation only confirms what history tells us of their sagacity. A great city was once saved by their cackling, though I do not think it is very pleasant music. But pray tell me about this room of Mr. Lecour's. If you can look into it, why cannot I who do so? Has he forbidden it to be over any one?"

"I reckin he have, an' of he knew dat I had peeped into it, I don't know what de consequence mought be. I'm talkin' to you cause you is my frien', an' I feels somehow, dat you'll not make a harmful use o' my gabble. I don't often find any one to talk wi', 'cept dat ole bumble' o' mine, an' he's kind o' stupid, an' goes to sleep half de time when I'm 'cumpetatin' my most 'lectable ideas."

"You need not fear my indiscretion. I feel too much in awe of Mr. Lecour myself to betray any of your confidences to him. I thought my grandfather lived on a higher plane."

"He be dis; but dis great house is alet off from de place by de trees dat has been 'lowed to grow so thick around it. De quarter is a mile off, an' de observer free than. He comes over once a month to make his 'port to masster!"

"And do you ever visit the people at the quarter?"

"Once you, no, honey; de master don't 'low it on no 'count; an' of any o' de people was to come over here, dey knows dat de bloodhound his keeps would be let loose on 'em. I never puts my foot off de place, 'cept once in a while, to go to de village for my 'victs, an' dat's only from de eto' as he aint no judge o'."

"Do you not find this life very lonely?"

"You may say dat, honey; but I has Pierre to keep me company in de manner to talk, 'sides de chickens an' things to feed. But whet'll you do to do dis on dem arter you gits settled down, for you won't have a yothly thing to 'muse you?"

"Oh, I shall find something to do," she replied, and if I could get a musical instrument I would keep up my practice. But to return to the kind of complyment for myself, be sure of that."

"I hope so, but of I 'scern de sense o' music in Cassie Hannal, I should say de wu'st were comin' to a cond sure 'nuff. You'll never bring dat 'strument nowhere."

"I shall make the effort, at any rate. I trust I shall not yet be able to bring Cassie into company to the lonely heart of my poor old grandfather. I am sure he will not object, when I come hither to be his good angel, and I must accomplish my mission in my own way, before I can establish an influence over him, but I trust that I shall succeed, and that in rendering my self useful to him."

Rady shook her head confidently.

"Ah, chile, you is young an' hopeful. You don't know you is come up wid de battle. You wouldn't 'spect much from basinolly materialism to wish a ole man dat's mos' ready for de grave 'cause to put de good 'fention out o' you mine, an' dey do say dat dey's mighty 'quick wi' pritty creeters."

Adrienne smilingly consented to this wise counsel, and the old woman's face softened.

"I'm done showed you everythin' now, young miste, and I shall go home 'mos time for de tea to be takin'. Mebbe you'd better go up to yer own room, for I reckin de bell in de tower will be 'nigh comes on. It makes some people nervyus to stay in a strange place, not young gals kept to take notices."

CHAPTER VII.

Thus disdained, Adrienne returned alone through the desolate mansion, and with nerves braced to the task before her, she ascended the shrunk at the echo of her own steps as she lifted them from the floor. She paused not to sun up the staircase and made a momentary pause before the door of the tower room, for she knew that she was to be watched, and she resolved to be her own mistress in her own house, and not to be cowed by the fear of loneliness by the thought that the length of the gallery separated her from her grandfather; and stern as he was, she knew that a single word from him to Rady would overcome her dread of offending him, and by its aim for companionship.

Later in the day she again came quietly up, bearing the volume of Ardenne, and stood long enough to hear the sound of its rich and elegant. Refreshing her cautious, the old woman left the room, and Adrienne was left to solitude.

Then she softly closed the door, and, drawing a chair to the large chair in front of the window, she threw her head back upon a spring revealed a dark, nothy bookcase, which was divided by a wide panel of black lace. Certain that no intrusive eye could now behold her, she opened the volume, and, turning over to her flips and heart, and murmured words of love and devotion to the absent one, whose name she had been willing to express to the original. She fell into a dreamy reverie, and shaking in the depths of her heart, she felt a sense of exposure, after the varied excitements of the day, which rendered her nervous.

She slept, at first lightly and fitfully, but gradually her head drooped, and her slumbers became more profound. She was not fatigue to her delicate frame, and she was not conscious of the lapse of time, when she was aroused by a sound which caused her to start up with a shudder that thrilled her sensitive frame, and she muttered:

"It is blood! I feel it—I know it; though the old woman declared it was only a coffin stain."

The words trembled upon her lips, and she stood within the darkened stairway. With the unstrengthened nerves of childhood, she heard her steps, she groped her way upward, and finally reached the panel door. She gazed around the room half fearfully, for all that had appeared that day seemed changed to her, filled with superstitious dread, and with a sigh of relief, she threw open the door, and stepped as she was placed near one of the windows.

The sun was setting, and Rady kept the apartments under her charge scrupulously aired, and Adrienne stood in the fresh air. But she might obtain a glimpse of the scene without. A magnificent view, with long, undulating reaches of moss hanging in picturesque festoons, grew just in front of the window, completely concealing the cemetery beyond it. But she could see the stranger shrank within her, when the thought that this dreary home, with its strange inmates was henceforth to be her home.

Adrienne had turned from her lover, in the sanguine belief that she would find peace and happiness under the protection of Mr. Lecour. Truthful and affectionate by nature, she had never dreamed that any one could plot to win a place in his heart, and induce him to endow her with sufficient fortune to render possible her union with her lover. The hope had sustained her courage when she had left her native city, and when she had first arrived in the old mansion, but now it had perished before the miserable reality of the dismal chamber in which she was placed. She sat down with a feeling of utter forlornness and desolation, and the tears of tears as youth is seldom called upon to shed.

The sound of lumbering footsteps upon the stairs aroused her from the indulgence of her feelings, and she gazed with affrighting eyes and half-parted lips upon the open door, expecting some goblin dire to make its appearance through it.

With a sensation of intense relief, she saw a thick face, ugly enough for a goblin, but with a human expression of pleasure at her presence there, and old Pierre came in, bearing a bundle of wood, with which he proceeded to light a fire from a few coals he carried in an iron pan.

With strangers, Pierre was as silent as his wife was talkative, and he hovered over the blaze before he departed, with a stolid contempt for his fellow-creatures, that he spoke not a syllable to the young girl, whose silent musing then had been a delightful surprise to him.

Adrienne had been prepared for his attention to her comfort, and the old negro's tongue was at once unloosed. He confidingly replied:

"It's my 'bineas to make de fires, missis, an' it's my pleasure to make sure for sich a pleasin'lookin' young lady as you is. I'll allers keep you a good supply o' wood, an' den you kin keep your fire a burnin' through all de dark nights. You'll be 'feared o' nothin', I reckin, in dis strange house. Now I mus' 'ten' to master's fires, an' I 'spect he'll want to see you, for he's gal'ry, I 'sho's' have to come up de dark stairs and neber you sight."

Adrienne flushed faintly at his accurate interpretation of her feelings, and replied, apologetically:

"Everything here is so strange to me that every hand startles me. I shall overcome this feeling in a few days, and I hope you will not think that I am afraid of you."

"Oh no, Miss'nelle, I aint ugl'ly look at. I has a good 'quaintance wi' myself, an' dat's why I never 'spect to be fearsome to any one else. Lessen I'm 'sturbed by de eyes looks like coals o' fire, de ole stock, sure 'nuff; an' your voice sounds like de singin' birds in de trees."

"And yet I am not of their blood," thought Adrienne. "God is tempering with his unwelcome to him who now claims the mastery here."

She uttered the words gravely, aptly gratefully thanked him for his attention to her wants, and then dismissed him, conscious that the sweet emotions of gratitude to this poor old creature, for the kindly sympathy he had shown for her loneliness.

"My own blood treats me as an alien," was the bitter thought that followed, and Adrienne's fair fell compassion for my isolated and forlorn position."

The fire leaped and flashed up the chimney, and Adrienne, with a shudder, turned away to its beams. Adrienne began to feel less nervous, and she resolved to grow up with her fate. She had made herself quite comfortable in her new quarters, when she was startled by the announcements, as her master was waiting for his supper, which order was the same voice. Adrienne was glad to doubt the fact, and then occupy herself with a little toilet, which the more considerate enough to send in to her. As Rady came, and she with obsequious bow, she hurriedly said:

"Is your name out o' your room, nor take no notice of my noises you may hear, young miste, cos it may to was for you den you may 'tickle, of de ole master, who has a touch o' de con' o' his tantrums. He cuts up mightily some times, but he don't mean no harm."

At the sound of Mr. Lecour's voice she absolutely trembled, and she felt that she had brought up a supply of wood for the night, and that she would not be disturbed as much as possible, as his master did not permit strangers to approach him, or to be approached, except himself.

Left to the solitude of the hour, the young stranger listened to his departing footsteps as they clattered down the stairs, and she felt able to combat the sense of loneliness by the thought that the length of the gallery separated her from her grandfather; and stern as he was, she knew that a single word from him to Rady would overcome her dread of offending him, and by its aim for companionship.

Later in the day she again came quietly up, bearing the volume of Ardenne, and stood long enough to hear the sound of its rich and elegant. Refreshing her cautious, the old woman left the room, and Adrienne was left to solitude.

Then she softly closed the door, drew a chair to the large chair in front of the window, she threw up the large chair in front of the window, and, with a sudden illumination, and fearfully glanced around, to see if the precaution was unnecessary.

The painting represented a woman of extraordinary beauty, with a profusion of golden hair, with a dark plume which fell upon her shoulder and mingled with the rich, golden locks, and with a golden glory around the white throat. The face was remarkable for its expression of sweetness and deeply touched. A sorrow that governed the deeper than being overwhelmed her. Behind this window over the lovely features, and fell could long gaze upon that fair face without a vague feeling of tenderness and compassion for the high-bred lofiness of lands and gold, who had had to pay a heavy penalty of sorrow and heartbreak for the privilege of being born to wealth and luxury.

"How strange! I seem to myself to belong more to the past than to the present!" she thought.

In passing to the recess in which was the sliding panel, Adrienne took especial care to walk over the stain upon the floor; but even with this precaution, she could not help a shiver of shudder that thrilled her sensitive frame, and she muttered:

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SPIRITS OF THE PAST.

BY FINLEY JOHNSON.

I am sitting all alone to-night,
  Communing with the past,
And solemn are the shadows which
  Are round about me cast;
And from the strings of memory,
  Comes forth a sad refrain;
Which strikes upon my troubled soul,
  In tones of endless pain;
The waters deep within my heart,
  Rise freighted with past bliss;
But soon subside—to rise no more
  Within a world like this.

I see once more the garden gate,
  Where Lily May and I
Stood oft at eve to watch the stars
  Climb up the azure sky;
One night I press'd her soft white hand,
  And clasped her to my side;
And said in low and earnest tones
  That she must be my bride;
But now!—I wake unto the real,
  With fear my heart is riven;
My love is dead, and God has now
  One Angel more in Heaven.

Yet still I sit, and oft commune
  With spirits of the past;
For they around their loved ones here
  Their wings of love oft cast;
And though ten years have pass'd away,
  Since Lily May and I
Watched by the garden gate the stars
  Climb up the azure sky,
Yet still her image from my heart
  Cannot by death be driven;
There is an hour when she shall greet
  My entrance into Heaven.

INDIAN FRIENDSHIP AND REVENGE.

A STORY OF THE NORTHWEST.

Non-on-i-go-ah (*the Blue Wind*), was justly acknowledged the bravest warrior of his tribe; and this among the warlike Blackfeet, who, it is conceded, even by their enemies, are the most chivalrous and fearless nation that hunt the buffalo upon the Great Plains of the Northwest, was by no means an insignificant compliment. And if one may believe the stories the French Voyageurs relate of him, and of his gallant exploits, he was well entitled to the reputation.

Among the many admirers of this renowned chief—for they were found among the whites, and half-breeds, as well as among the Red men—perhaps there never was one more enthusiastic than my old canoe friend and interpreter, Francois; and while encamped beneath some grassy bluff, or on the point of some quiet sandbar, there was no story he loved so well to repeat, as the following:

Non-on-i-go-ah, who was the son of a chief, was noted while yet a boy, as the leader of all the youthful games and mock fights, which took place upon the plain in front of the village, and at an early age was ambitious to deck his head with the eagle feathers of the warrior. This is a distinction to which all Indian youth aspire; and when scarcely half grown, he was permitted to accompany the warriors of his band, on the war trail against a band of Crees. The latter Indians had encroached upon the buffalo range, claimed as the exclusive territory of the Blackfeet, and were engaged in slaughtering animals, and jerking the meat, when the war party came suddenly upon them.

A bloody fight ensued, and many scalps were lost and taken on both sides. Among the Crees were many children and women, some of whom fell into the hands of the Blackfeet, and were afterwards adopted by them.

In the fiercest of the engagement, *Non-on-i-go-ah* singled out a remarkably handsome youth, about his own age, and rushed upon him. The young Cree stood his ground bravely, and received him with his upraised war club, which descended with a stunning blow upon his head. Quick as thought the boy whipped out his tiny knife, and was about to cut the scalp from the crown of his assailant, when the young Blackfoot, suddenly aroused by the pull upon his scalp lock, leaped to his feet, and with a blow of his fist struck his enemy to the ground. Non-on-i-go-ah now had the advantage, and grasping the knife just before raised upon himself, was about to perform the same operation upon the Cree, when, instantly struck by some expression in his face, or by some boyish caprice, he threw the blade from him, and disarming him, claimed the lad as his prisoner.

On the return of the Blackfeet to their village, it was proposed, by the father of Non-on-i-go-ah, to put the young Cree to torture, that his braves might celebrate the "victory dance" about him. But to this the boy, who now claimed to be a warrior, and entitled to the crest of eagle feathers, most strongly protested. He insisted that the captive was his prisoner, and he had the sole right to his person and his life. But the old chief was unmoved, and the young Cree was sentenced to undergo the horrors of the stake. The time was appointed, and the band notified of the coming event. In the meantime, however, the prisoner had disappeared; Non-on-i-go-ah had secretly withdrawn him from the medicine lodge, where he had been confined, and it was supposed that he had escaped to his people. His young captor had secreted him, in charge of two of his boy companions, upon an adjacent island in the river, and daily visited him. At length the strongest friendship grew up between these brave boys, and the Cree was adopted finally, with the consent of the tribe, as the brother of his noble protector.

They grew up side by side—their friendship cemented by the strongest ties, and their lives pledged to each other; and whether upon the hunt, or the war trail, *Non-on-i-go-ah* and his beloved *Won-ga-non* (White Buffalo), were never separated. Such was their mutual attachment, that when they became men, they owned everything—arms and horses, and even their dresses and medicine bags in common. Whenever they were spoken of by their band, they were always designated as *Teha-ho-tum-mee—the knotted horns that cannot be separated*—a reference to those antlers of elks, frequently found with the skeletons of those animals, so firmly entangled in some desperate and deadly encounter that no force short of breaking the branches, can tear them apart.

Thus these generous youths grew in stature and friendship together, till they reached the years of manhood, honored and beloved by all their people. They were acknowledged to be the handsomest and bravest among the young men; and there was not a maiden in the nation who would not gladly have kindled the lodge fire of either.

One day, while on the hunt together, a little distance from the village, these two friends, unsuspicious of danger, were suddenly beset by a scalping party of Shoshones, who were lying in ambush for them—and Non-on-i-go-ah, who was at some distance from his adopted brother, saw him shot to the heart with an arrow, and fall to the ground from his horse. At the same instant a half a score of the enemies rushed from their hiding-places to claim his scalp.

Non-on-i-go-ah, though almost frantic at the murder of his friend, was nevertheless as prudent as he was brave; and knowing the uselessness of his attempting, alone and single-handed, to defend the body, flew madly to the village, and raising the alarm, led a party of braves in pursuit. But the Shoshones had left a clean trail behind them, and could not be overtaken.

On retracing his steps mournfully to the spot, where still lay the mangled body of *Won-ga-non*, he found it impaled with a war spear, which in insulting bravado the foe had left starting from the wound. Tearing the bloody weapon from the body, Non-on-i-go-ah raised it aloft, and calling the Great Spirit to witness his words, in the presence of the braves, swore that the blood of his brother should be wiped off only in the heart of his murderer; and then, with yells of grief, he led the way back to the village.

The old chief recognized the mark upon the spear shaft as that of a noted war chief among the mountain Shoshones, named *Wee-cap-o-tar*, (*or Two Buffalo Bulls*.)

On learning this, Non-on-i-go-ah, with the spear still in his hand, ran frantically through the village, and stopping at the door of every lodge, again swore that he would never rest, nor sleep again in the place, till he had revenged the death of the brother of his heart—by bathing the bloody weapon in the bosom of *Wee-cap-o-tar*.

"I see the heart of my brother dripping blood from the point of this blade," said he, as he raised it aloft, "and it calls loudly upon Non-on-i-go-ah for revenge; and I have said it—it *shall be revenged!*

"I will take the war path alone; and if I return not for many moons, let none mourn for me; for I shall come again. The Great Spirit tells me I shall return with the scalp of *Wee-cap-o-tar* upon this blade, that has drank the blood of my brother! Let no man follow me!"

So saying, the warrior left the village, with his quiver full of arrows, his knife in his belt, and the spear of the Shoshone in his hand. For a time his people gazed sadly after him, as he wended rapidly, in a western direction, over the plain. At length the sun went down beyond the mountains, and he was no longer seen.

For two or three days Non-on-i-go-ah journeyed boldly—for as he passed over the rolling prairie, he could from the elevations survey a wide scope of country; and had any party of the hated Shoshones been abroad, he would have readily detected them. Thus he kept on in the fresh trail of Wee-cap-o-tar's party till they had entered the hills. Here he found it more necessary to move with caution, and therefore travelled only during the night—lying secreted in caves and crevices of the rocks by day, or venturing forth only to procure such small game as he required for subsistance.

One night, while clambering among the hills, he found himself suddenly upon the edge of a low cliff, overlooking a little valley, in the centre of which the beams of the setting moon lighted up the silver surface of a little lakelet, on the margin of which a smoldering fire showed it was the resting place of a party of Indians.

By the dim light he perceived that there were but three of them. Non-on-i-go-ah doubted not they were stragglers from the band of Wee-cap-o-tar, and he at once determined to steal upon them, and possess himself of their scalps.

With the stealthy tread of the wildcat, the young Blackfoot descended the bluff, and drawing himself through the damp grass upon his belly, silently approached the group. They were all buried in sleep—a sleep from which they were never more to awaken. The young man drew closer upon them; and as the moonlight fell upon their upturned faces, he discovered by the war paint still upon them that they were part of that same band of Shoshones that had killed his friend; and with the spring of the she panther he was upon them, and before the warriors were conscious of their danger, his keen knife was in their hearts. A few gurgling gasps—a few faint struggles—and their spirits had commenced the long journey their fathers had trodden before them.

The Blackfoot, snatching off their scalps, buried his lance-point deep into their bosoms, and raising it on high, while the red blood glistened in the rays of the sinking moon, thanked the Great Spirit for the happy omen, and then moved with exultant step away. But suddenly an idea occurred to him, and returning to the bleeding bodies of his victims, he hastily disrobed himself, and throwing his dress into the lake, stripped off that of one of the Shoshones, eagle feathers and all, and arrayed his own form in them. This completed, he turned his face once more westward, and continued his journey, with a lighter heart than he had known before since the death of Won-ga-non.

Westward he pressed his way till he reached the mountains, where, from valley to valley, he wandered in search of the village of Wee-cap-o-tar. Weeks passed away in the search, till one morning, as the sun broke through the early mists, his eyes were gladdened with a sight of a long line of lodges, which he at once recognized as those of the Shoshones.

Again the Blackfoot sought the shelter of the rocks, till the darkness of night closed upon the valley, when confident in the security of his disguise, he descended into the village. Fearlessly moving about the lodges and among the Shoshones, he sought for that of the hated Wee-cap-o-tar. For several nights he returned to the village, listening to the talk of the groups, amid which he boldly moved, till finally he ascertained the dwelling of the chief. But to his chagrin, he also learnt that his enemy was absent with a small party on an expedition against a band of Crows, whose village was among the Black Hills, to the south. This was discouraging to the brave fellow, and for some time he was undecided what to do. To return to his people he could never do without the scalp of his brother's murderer, for he had sworn to have this, or leave his bones to bleach upon the soil of the enemy's country. His dilemma was, whether to go in search of Wee-cap-o-tar's band, and watch his chance to waylay him upon the trail, or await his return to his village. But at length he decided upon the latter.

After many more days, and when the Blackfoot was suffering greatly for the want of food, (for while he remained secreted in the neighborhood, it was impossible for him to procure game,) his ears were gladdened with the war-cry of the returning band. They had made a successful foray, and were now advancing with a large herd of horses stolen from the Crows, and a number of scalps dangling from their spears and bridles.

When they reached their village the sun had gone down, and darkness soon after drawing its veil over the valley, Non-on-i-go-ah descended from his hiding-place, and joined in the victory dance with which the warriors were welcomed. He moved amid the crowd as fearlessly as if he were among the lodges of his own band, for his dress was that of a Shoshone, and none suspected that a deadly foe was in their midst.

At length the ceremony was ended for the night, and as the last exultant yells of the excited savages had died in echoes among the hills, Wee-cap-o-tar wended his way to his lodge. But there was a sleepless vengeance following in his footsteps, the fierce eye of the Blackfoot was upon him, and never again were his own eyes to close, till the last eternal slumber of death should come upon them. His untiring foe watched him till his form disappeared behind the curtain of his wigwam.

Non-on-i-go-ah threw himself upon the ground in the rear of the lodge, where he remained till the last noise had ceased in the village, and he knew the wearied warriors slept. He now boldly approached the door of the lodge, and entered, still bearing the blood-stained lance upon his arm. In the centre of the lodge glimmered the flickering flames of the expiring fire, over which still hung a vessel containing the remnant of the supper of the chief and his squaw.

The Blackfoot was hungry, and seating himself by the fire so that he could overlook the bed where the Shoshone had lain himself by the side of his wife, appropriated the contents to his own use.

The woman observing the actions of the stranger, roused her husband and asked:

"What strange man is that eating in the lodge?"

"I don't know," was the reply. "I suppose he is hungry—let him alone," and the chief turning himself in his robes, was soon lost in sleep. Among these wild Indians of the far west, it is customary for any one who is hungry to enter any lodge he chooses, and help himself to such food as he may find; for where the plains are covered with buffaloes, meat, the gift of the Great Spirit to his red children, belongs alike to all, and all are welcome to it.

Non-on-i-go-ah heard the words, but, regardless of them, continued to eat till he had satisfied his hunger; and then observing the pipe of his enemy, still warm from his last smoke, deliberately filled its bowl from the bag lying by its side, and lighting it by the fire, smoked it as if he were in his own lodge. Whiff after whiff rose in fragrant clouds from his mouth, as he sat with his eyes fixed fiercely upon the face of the unsuspecting Shoshone.

When he had finished the pipe, he knocked out its ashes and laid it aside. Then rising to his feet, he approached the bed of Wee-cap-o-tar, and laying his hand upon his shoulder, aroused him by the startling inquiry:

"Shoshone, do you *know me?*"

"No—*who are you?*" was the hurried reply, as the warrior endeavored to spring to a sitting position.

"I am Non-on-i-goah, the brother of the Blackfoot, Won-ga-non, whom you murdered with this lance! I am his avenger!" and clutching the Shoshone by the hair with his left hand, and forcing him upon the bed, with his right he buried the weapon into his heart ere he could utter a cry, and whipping off his scalp, darted from the lodge, and before the woman could raise the alarm, Non-on-i-go-ah was hidden beyond discovery among the rocks of the hills.

Many weeks had passed, and the Blackfeet had ceased to look for the return of the young warrior; they were confident he had fallen at the hands of their enemies, and his spirit had long since joined that of his beloved Won-ga-non upon the hunting-grounds of the blest; his friends had already cut off their locks in token of his death, when one morning they heard an exultant shout upon the prairie, and upon the green swell, descending rapidly towards the village, was a warrior waving over his head a long lance, from which were dangling four dark objects.

It was Non-on-i-go-ah returning successfully from his errand of revenge, with the scalps of the Shoshone chief and three of his warriors; and now the fierce war-cry of the band rang wildly out upon the plain, and the brother of Won-ga-non forgot his grief.

MY COUSIN CHARLIE.

BY MARY C. VAUGHAN.

My mother and I lived all alone in the tiny cottage which was almost the sole property my father had left us.

We had been living some years in this lonely way, for the friends of prosperous days had nearly all fallen away from us; when a letter arrived (from my aunt Martha, in India,) which was destined to change the whole current of our lives.

The letter was not such as we had expected. Aunt Martha wrote that she had received the tidings of her brother's death while watching by the dying bed of her husband—that she, too, was now a widow, and her child fatherless—that our grief must have been hers in any case, but was now the more deeply felt because a similar bereavement had fallen upon herself. We, she supposed, were in our own home, surrounded by troops of friends, while she battled with her sorrow among strangers in a far land, and with her son's love for her sole consolation.

Thus bereaved, she wrote, she felt it impossible longer to remain in India. She should come home, reaching New York in the spring of the following year, and she and her son would gladly take up their abode with us for a time.

My mother and I looked at each other in dismay. It was already the spring of the year following that in which my aunt's letter had been writtten, that letter had evidently been delayed, and she and her son might have been passengers upon the very ship that brought it to our shores. How were we to provide for their accommodation in our tiny cottage? How dispose of the train of foreign servants they would doubtless bring with them?

We had little time to spend in uncertainty, for the evening mail brought us a letter from my aunt, dated at New York, in which she announced that she and her son would be with us by the latter part of the week, with two servants and the bulk of their luggage. So the question of ways and means must be discussed, in committee of the whole, at once.

"By the way, mamma," I asked, "how old is Cousin Charlie? I thought Aunt Martha had lost all her children in that unhealthy climate. I don't think I ever heard of Charlie before."

"And I am sure your father told me she had lost all. I seldom read her letters, myself, but I think this one must have been born since she wrote last, for I am very clear that all her older one's are dead. He cannot be more than four or five years old, I should think."

"What a dear little pet! I shall be so glad to have him here. It must be very pleasant to have a little child to caress and care for."

"Yes, dear. Home is not half home to a true woman without children. I thought four years ago that I should have been grandmamma by this time."

Dear mamma! She was the kindest of mothers, but she lacked tact. She never knew the sore aching of my heart that had followed the earliest storm of my grief and indignation, when Julian Howard deserted me in my poverty and bereavement. She thought the wound was healed, because it no longer bled outwardly. A cold pang shot through my heart at her words, and I hastened from the room, lest she should see how she had wounded me.

But better thoughts came to me in the busy solitude of the rooms I was preparing for our guests. If I was to live unloved, it was by no means necessary that I should also live unloving. I had mamma's declining years to watch over and make happy, and now, just as the monotony of my life was beginning to wear upon me, my aunt and little cousin were coming to give me new objects of interest. I shall be one of the sisterhood of single women, I said to myself, but I will find my happiness in being useful—husband and children may not be mine, but I can create for myself a sphere as honorable, if not as completely happy, as that of domestic life.

I was but twenty-four years of age, and life stretched far and long before me. I glanced at the mirror and saw a complexion that a simple, quiet life had made fresh and healthful as in early youth: undimmed eyes; tresses of golden brown, without a line of silver in all their shining bands; a form with all its youthful roundness. I did not look much like the conventional "old maid," but I had so long taken it for granted that such was to be my lot, that I wondered whence sprung the little sigh that parted my lips, and seemed to come quivering from the depths of that heart where my early disappointment still rankled. I believe those were tears that fell upon the snowy toilet cover I was spreading on the table of the guest-chamber, but I hardly know to which of the vague griefs that oppressed me they were due. And these all fled away when, with Jane's assistance, I brought down the crib in which I had slept a score of years before, from its long rest in the garret, and placed it in the room that had been mine, and heaped it with snowy pillows, meet for the rosy slumbers of the little cousin I expected.

I was very happy all that day, and the next, and the next, preparing for the new-comers and looking forward to the life that had so suddenly acquired new hopes and interest.

Mamma was restless and fretful. She had begun to settle quietly to the humble circumstances of her changed lot, she was an invalid and loved quiet, she was a proud woman and valued wealth and its accessories, and all this bustle, this anxious calculation of means, this adaptation of our narrow surroundings and scanty room and furniture to the accommodation of these stranger relatives, worried and annoyed her.

On the third day, after we had completed our frugal mid-day meal, our preparations being all ended, and our guests scarcely expected until the next day, I persuaded her to lie down for a long rest in her own room, while I tied on my garden hat and cloak, and taking a little basket of delicacies on my arm, set off to visit an humble friend and former servant of ours, who lived at the distance of a mile, and was lying ill.

I found poor Janet much worse than I had expected. She was quite alone, for her husband, an idle, reckless fellow, without either feeling or principle, had not provided her with an attendant, and was himself absent. Common humanity, had I not been, as I was, truly attached to the poor woman, would have prompted me to remain beside her until I had made every possible arrangement for her comfort, and the afternoon was well advanced when I was at last at liberty. Afterwards I called at a neighboring farm-house to procure the attendance of some person there, upon the sick woman, so that by the time I came in sight of my home the evening shadows were falling low and long.

The sight I saw there quickened my steps, and made my heart beat with unwonted agitation.

A large travelling carriage stood before the gate. The driver, assisted by one man, was carrying luggage into the cottage, and a dusky, shrill-voiced maid was busily unpacking its interior, and talking all the time in scolding tones to a burly, red-faced man of middle age, who leaned idly against the garden palings.

"Here's your master's dressing-case," I heard the brown maiden say, as I approached. "I suppose you won't feel above carrying that into the house—suppose it is not too heavy for your delicate hands."

The man moved lazily from his place, took the dressing-case, which he deposited under one arm, and then, as he turned, caught a glance of me standing almost by his side and lifted his hat, while the girl stared at me an instant with her large, mournful eyes, and dropped me a little courtesy.

There was no need of questions. I knew my aunt had come, and though I wondered what a child of four could want of that splendid dressing-case, I presumed that I should soon have my explanation; and as I followed the man, wondered that it had not occurred to me before that it had been the property of my deceased uncle.

The drawing-room was almost dark as I entered it. My mother, bewildered by being suddenly roused from her sleep, and with all her grief renewed by the sight of my aunt, was sobbing upon the sofa, where the two widows, in their sable garments, sat encircled in each other's arms.

My aunt rose as I approached her, and folded me in her embrace. A sunbeam entering between the quivering vine-leaves showed me her noble face—a softened reflex of my father's, yet with a calm, steadfast strength shining from all its lineaments, such as I had never seen in his. My heart went out to her in deep love and trust at once, and the kiss that we exchanged was the kiss of heartfelt adoption. My mother had always leaned upon me, but suddenly the strength that had almost failed beneath the burden, was renewed. A stronger and more steadfast nature had come to my aid.

"But where is my cousin?" I asked, when the first sentences of welcome and inquiry had been uttered. "Dear boy! I am so anxious to greet him."

"Here he is—by your side, and waiting for his welcome," said a rich, manly voice at my ear.

I turned and confronted—not the child I had pictured—not a baby Charlie, a pet and plaything, but a tall young man, whose years probably exceeded mine by three or four, whose dark, handsome face was brilliant with smiles, and whose outstretched hand waited to press my own. I was positively ashamed of the embarrassed greeting which alone, in my surpaise, I was able to ejaculate, but the laugh that followed my words taught me that the cause of my embarrassment was understood.

"Your mother, my good aunt, inquired very kindly for 'the baby' as soon as we arrived," continued that pleasant voice. "I am sorry for your disappointment, but if a full-grown cousin Charlie will in any degree compensate you for the loss of your expected pet, here he is, quite at your service, and ready to receive and to bestow all the affection which he learns you have been anticipating. We shall be *friends*, as well as cousins, I trust."

He looked so handsome and winning, as he said this, that I could not resist putting my hand again in his, nor turn from the kiss he pressed upon my cheek as the seal of our compact. I believe I was, even then, happier than I should have been with a baby cousin.

Our tiny cottage could not, by any means, contain the party that had arrived, so, after our late tea, Charlie and his valet went away to the village tavern, and the next day found lodgings at a farm-house near our home. The crib, stripped of its snowy covering, was again consigned to the garret. I returned to my own room, and the brown maid found another lodging, for my aunt liked me to be near her, and was never tired of telling me, in her caressing tones, how much I reminded her of the daughters she had lost.

Cousin Charlie lost his title long ago. He is my husband now, and we live in the great house which was the home of my childhood. My mother and aunt choose to live together in the tiny cottage. The white-covered crib stands always in my old room; and when our babies are sent to visit their grandmother's, they take rosy slumbers beneath its snowy canopy. I have found my true sphere—one of love and duty—and my home is a whole home, a real home; for a dear husband and children dwell there with me in a sweet household band that love unites, and perfect content makes holily beautiful.

WIT AND WISDOM.

ORIGINAL AND SELECTED—PREPARED EXPRESSLY FOR THE LEDGER BY GEO. D. PRENTICE.

THE most that you can do to a good man is to persecute him; and the worst that persecution can do is to kill him. And killing a good man is as bad as it would be to spite a ship by launching it. The soul is built for Heaven, as the ship for the ocean.

THE plant that sprang from Helen's tears destroyed serpents. Would that from woman's tears some plant might ever spring to destroy the serpents in her bosom.

THERE are melancholy men to whom life is only a Dismal Swamp, upon whose margin they walk, making signals to Death to come and ferry them over the lake.

IF a man has a good foot and figure and wants merely to make money, let him rather be a dancer than a thinker.

EAT little to-day, and you will have a better appetite to-morrow—more to eat to-morrow and more to-morrows for eating.

THE two most difficult things to conceal are love and drunkenness; words, tones, looks, gestures, gait, all betray them.

MANKIND would not now be content to dwell again in the Garden of Eden unless there were a market-house, a grocery, a hotel, and a railroad hard by.

IF a disagreeable fellow insists on sharing your house with you, take the inside for your share, and give him the outside.

THE man who, in talking to a lady, lays his hand upon her shoulder, may be thought too touching in his remarks.

THE old Jewish law was an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth. The law of lovers is a sigh for a sigh and a kiss for a kiss.

GOD says to the fruit-tree, blossom and bear; and to the human heart, bear and blossom—the soul's great blossoming is the flower of suffering.

THE champion should always be worthy of the cause; the great breath of freedom herself is degraded by being blown through a penny whistle.

THE cheerful are the busy; when trouble knocks at your door or rings the bell, he will generally retire if you send him word, "*engaged*."

MILTON says that many thistles grow upon Parnassus. That must be the reason why so many donkeys browse there.

IT isn't generally considered that political editors are entitled to pensions, yet a good many of them might well be pen-shunners.

HE is not a true lover who doesn't think it better that a city should be sacked or an armada sunk than that the little finger of his sweetheart should ache.

TWO things are greatly needed in these times—first, to curtail the laws; secondly, to curtail the lawyers.

IT too often happens that being above the reach of want just places us within the reach of avarice.

THERE is a self-will that would break a world to pieces to make a stool to sit on.

THOSE only are fit for solitude, who like nobody, are like nobody, and are liked by nobody.

IT is useless to bid young men and women bear bravely up, they are always losing heart.

IF we would take snap-judgment on an intruder upon your premises, set a dog on him.

A MAN of fast habits is a man of lax morals; he plays the game of fast and loose.

GOOD sayings always suffer by repetition; good deeds never do.

IF a man has warts and pimples on his nose, his face may be said to be roughly handled.

WEEDS should never have been allowed to bloom, nor fools to marry.

THE man troubled with a severe cold has a spell of personal bad weather.

SO live that when your eyes are fixed in death they may be fixed on high.

THE indigent world might be clothed from the trimmings of the vain.

CURRENT ITEMS.

A BOY, fourteen years of age, was hung in a swing, in the cellar of his parents' residence, in Jersey City, one day recently, where he was in the habit of amusing himself. When discovered by a young sister he was found with his neck twisted in the cords of the swing, his body thrown forward, and his knees resting on the cellar bottom. He was in the habit of standing up in the swing and twisting it up as far as possible, and then allowing it to untwist rapidly and spin him round and round; and it is supposed that while thus spinning about he became dizzy, and falling, was caught by the neck, twisted up in the rope and thereby strangled.

THE police discovered a den of counterfeiters in Thirty-seventh street a short time since and broke it up, but succeeded in capturing only the son of the principal counterfeiter. They made nothing but cents, both of the new and old kind, of which the captured boy said they had put off large quantities. The dies were carried away by the proprietor of the den, and will probably be put to further use.

A YOUNG man in Brooklyn, being out of employment, got hold of an electrical apparatus, hired a room, and advertised himself as an electrician; but nearly killing his first subject with a perfect thunderbolt of the electric fluid, he was obliged to flee to avoid arrest on a criminal prosecution. He should remember Napoleon's celebrated motto: "The tools to them that can handle them."

AS a number of girls, from ten to fifteen years of age, were on their way home from school, in Brooklyn, one afternoon lately, they got to skylarking and poking fun and their parasols at each other, and one of them accidentally stuck the point of her parasol staff in the eye of one of her schoolmates with such force as to destroy its sight.

THE body of an unknown man, apparently about thirty years of age, well-dressed, and of respectable appearance, was found floating in the Sound, between Fresh Pond and Smithtown Landing, one morning recently. The body showed no marks of violence, and had nothing on it by which the name of the unfortunate could be ascertained.

A NUMBER of young men were pitching quoits near Bedford, one day recently, and some of them getting by the ears, became irrepressibly belligerent, and finally one of the party hurled a quoit (a large flat stone) at the head of a comrade who annoyed him, which hit the person at whom it was aimed on the temple, and hurt him so badly it was thought he would die of the injury.

A SOLDIER who bravely fought and was wounded at the battle of Bull Run, was robbed the other day, by a servant girl in his boarding house, of all his pay, which he had received but a few days previous, and with which he had come to New York, on furlough, for the purpose of enjoying a brief respite, after recovering from his wounds.

A MAN named Jackson, living in Williamsburg, was arrested a few evenings since, after a desperate resistance, on the charge of wife-murder, he having beaten and kicked his wife until she was insensible, and seemingly mortally hurt. The unfortunate woman was taken to the hospital, and the husband was locked up to await the result of her injuries.

A SURGEON living up town lately cut his throat, to escape a threatened criminal prosecution on account of an accident that occurred while he was performing a surgical operation. Being a man of much professional pride and faithfulness, the accident and the threatened prosecution so preyed upon his mind, that he sought refuge in death.

A MAN about sixty years of age was found one morning recently lying dead, with his face in the gutter, in Sixteenth street. It is supposed that he fell with his face downward, while he was drunk or in a fit, and was suffocated, there being a few inches of water in the gutter.

A COUPLE of men got into a savage fight a few nights since, in Forty-second street, when one of them bit off the under lip and gouged out the eye of the other. The perpetrator of this fiendish barbarity was arrested on a charge of mayhem, and sent to the Tombs to await his trial.

A WOMAN was burned to death in Fourth-street the other evening, by her clothes catching fire from a fluid lamp. She screamed frightfully, and ran around and around, so no one could help her, until she was burnt so badly as to be beyond the reach of mortal aid.

NEW YORK LEDGER

ROBERT BONNER, Editor and Proprietor.

NEW YORK, SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 30, 1861.

THE CLOSE OF THE FOURTEENTH AND TWELFTH QUARTERLY YEAR OF THE LEDGER.—We are more than ever convinced that the publication of a paper like the LEDGER is a public benefit, and a good paper is a gold mine to any one who conducts it with energy and liberality, as a publication. Our circulation is larger than we calculated it would be at any one period.

NO TRAVELLING AGENTS.—We employ no travelling agents. If any party pretends to act on behalf of the LEDGER, he is a thief, down as a swindler.

WE CANNOT change the address of a subscriber, unless he gives us his former, as well as his present address.

RECEIPTS MANUSCRIPTS.—We will not return rejected manuscripts.

WINTER QUARTERS.

From the fifteenth of December to the fifteenth of March, military operations in the field, anywhere in the country north of North Carolina, are generally impossible. It is true, the Virginian winter is milder than winter north of New England, but there are days and nights during every winter in Virginia when it is cold enough to freeze to death a sleeping soldier, and to render him quite unfit for service. Occasionally, they have in Richmond snow enough for a few hours' sleighing. Usually, the winter of six years ago, snow covered the ground, in the fine forests of Virginia, for days, for six weeks. When the winter is mild, and there is no snow, the sanguinary soldier is apt to be deluged with rain, and the roads become nearly impassible with mud.

Our army, therefore, must expect to pass at least the three winter months in camp or barracks. Whether these shall be models of misery, sickness, demoralization and death, or months of cheerful exertion, improvement, and healthy enjoyment, depends upon the wisdom and firmness of commanders and men.

The average soldier is a child. He will not take care of his own health, he cannot, he is incapable of foresight, he provided for, the volunteer soon learns the habit of taking care of himself, and loses entirely upon his officers. If he is a good soldier he will obey orders and follow his virtue ends. It has been discovered by military men in every country, and acted upon as a law, that nothing whatever that relates to health and discipline can be safely left to the discretion of the soldier.

In winter, for example, men are constantly getting wet, particularly their feet. In civil life, those wet men would make haste to change or dry their wet clothes. In camp, it is a fatal necessary both to compel soldiers to do this, and to provide them conveniences for doing it. A drying room or hut, furnished with a stove, jugs and linen, and other clothes, so that every man can easily and quickly dry his clothes, saves a world of suffering and many lives—provided the men are *obliged* to make prompt use of it. So of ventilation. Soldiers will not from proper care that there is an aperture in their huts, or holes during the night. Eight men will go to sleep in a little, almost air-tight enclosure, the air of which soon becomes real poison. It was this that led Napoleon to oppose the use of huts altogether. He would have suffered less from exposure to the weather than from inhaling deadly poison in his huts. Seven or eight hours out of every twenty-four, but a vigilant, firm and humane officer can prevent this.

The army that will go into winter-quarters comparatively raw and undisciplined, may expect end of winter quarters, next spring, accomplished soldiers. The officers must carry the soldiers through, leaving nothing to their own choice which is essential either to health or discipline. Good cooking, cleanliness of person and camp, pure air, dry clothes, a warm hut, and, above all, plenty of games, newspapers and books, will give us in the spring of 1862 the finest army ever assembled.

SADDENING WORDS.

There are many explosions words in the English language—words that, when we hear or read modern tongue emcee the Hallies—of which the sound so harmonizes with the sense, that we hear them at once the ear and the heart. The vocal body, so to speak, with which the sound is embodied, seems so appropriate to it as a lovely countenance to the possessor of a beautiful mind.

"Home," "Love," "Slumber," "Curses," "Welcome," belong to this category; but it is by certain pathetic expressions that the full sentiment of sound and sentiment strikes us as most perfect. Thus we find, "Forever and ever," the most mournful of all words; Syron gave the same melancholy pre-eminence to "Never more;" and Dr. Johnson thought that of all phrases "The best in the world," the most touching. "The last look"—"the last sight"—"the last of Earth," there are certainly solemn and affecting circumstances; but we think, with a certain feeling, there is another and yet more touching word—"gone" than in any other in the language. To say of Spanish, or rather Moorish, metaphor, it is "full of tears." How it appeals to the ear—and how does the heart of the weeping watcher when spoken, over any dear one, in the closing hour—"Gone!—is cold all hope. It vibrates on the ear like toss of a passing bell. Some "gone, ever!"—what four syllables in any language comprehend so much of mystery, and, desolating soul woe! "Gone!" says the lorn mother, when the death angel has borne away from her the bosom of her fair flock, "and I am left alone, alone!" "Gone!" shrieks the distracted widow as she reads the name of her heart's idol on the death-roll of war. "Oh, husband, that I had died with thee!" "Gone!" note the strong man, on his return, as he looks around his home, from the solemn room where the wife of his heart lies cold and pulseless. Ah! it is a word of sorrow even when spoken of the absent who may return, but, as applied to the unreturning dead, there is a desolate sadness that can never be carved on tomb or monument so full of genuine pathos.

Yet there is a connection in which it imparts consolation to the bereaved. If we can say truthfully of those who have left us—" Gone!—gone to the better land," and hope and believe that we shall meet them where there are no more partings and the language of sorrow is unknown, we shall not refuse to be comforted "because they are not."

OUR FUTURE FIGHTERS.

It is proposed in some quarters to make military drill a part of the routine of our public schools. The experiment has been tried in boys' schools, and, so we are informed, with great effect. At first, of course, the boys are mightily pleased with the new exercise, and exhibit great zeal. If, however, the drill is at all thorough, they soon become heartily sick of it, and are glad of any excuse to get off. At the same time, they learn nothing but the manual exercise and a few simple evolutions, and are apt to conceive a permanent disgust for everything relating to military affairs. Not so with our boys in the colleges. They are old enough to take a real interest in the thing, and have the necessary spirit both in drill, and in the use of weapons. Many of our wisest citizens think that such a student should henceforth graduate from one of our colleges who does not know the drill, the exercise, art that can be known without service in the field.

We consider this a matter of very great importance, because we believe that the United States, during the next fifty years, have got to do a great deal of fighting. The very part of our national career is over. What we gain henceforth we must gain either by hard knocks or by being ready at any moment to deal hard knocks. In a year, or two years, we may have what will be called a peace; but it will be a truce merely; it will be a truce. So let the boys play; but let every thing also be done to prepare them for the men's part for the country.

We cannot say when every gentleman was taught the use of arms in order that he might be able to fight duels. We have another motive. The time now is, when every gentleman must be a soldier, that he may be able to lead his fellow citizens against the enemies of his country.

JOHN CHINAMAN AS A HISTORIAN.

The Chinese publish their annals in their almanacs. "The Imperial Almanac of China for 1861," says a writer in the *Times*, "contains gives a summary of the events of the preceding year. This is highly edifying. We learn, for instance of that interesting mand designated foreign devils," red devils," and "black devils," by every other uncomplimentary epithets. This style has been steadily improving. The earliest of these compilers, and in the work for the current year the foreign barbarians have become the subjects of the white folks. The way in which the war with France and England in 1860 is described is as remarkably funny. Nothing is said of origin of the war, but the emperor's answer to the tribute conceded. The humiliation of the empire is considered extreme, and passed over. It is merely stated, in an off-hand way, that the French and English forces came to Tientsin, and that the manufacturing interests of France and England, which, like all highly edifying, are characteristics

OUR FELLOW-CREATURES.

BY MRS. L. H. SIGOURNEY.

"God prefer unto Noah, Behold, I establish my covenant with you, and with your seed after you; and with every living creature that is with you, of the fowl, of the cattle, and with every beast of the earth; neither shall all flesh be cut off any more by the waters of a flood."—Genesis, ix.

The Son of Thine flows o'er the bosom of life,
Flees with a gentle kiss, the bird's tender head,
And breezes of Sorn. The balmy lap
To the bright flood with envelop'd gift
On the fragrant of the under-feet,
And tangled vine, and the wild flower that climbs
In dew parfumes. The still grass on
Of the mountain, as if Ocean's heart,
Swelling and surging with a mighty grief
Could find no respite. Galaxy and song

Afford no refuge to the eternal moan
Of misery, that from the desolate earth,
The under-strata of society,
Upreach, night and day. Who hate may hear
The whole creation of inferior things
Groaning and travelling, with pain, because
Of man's oppression.

The poor brute who toils
For him who smites him, hath no friend to stay
The uplifted scourge. No helper to withdraw
Its cruel burden from its wearied back.
Whose nature was pointless yet sent our hearts
From their down-trodden propensities.

Methinks
Their silence sentient properties unjoy with
Some condescension. See the elephant
Lift high his foot* to spare the fallen child;
The horse, with gratulating neigh salutes
The groom who feeds him; and the noble dog
Down from the flood the drowning boy, or flies
With his lived master.

Even in lower grades
We trace intelligences, or pain, perhaps
Useful enough for our lordly ease.
The fabbet of the barnyard flock might give
Lessons in mournful economy; the ant,
Whose lives's wisest monarch deigned to probe,
Tractate of forethought and of industry.
While the untiring instinct of the bee
Amazing sweetness even from weed and thorn,
Are lessons in a true philosophy.

Then
Over we not something to the humbled tribes
That die and faddling, or lie down to rest
That we may live? The inquisitive we obtain
Of the sea, and the air, and the serious
Save food and clothes. Might we not likewise
Some sort of kindness on their narrow span,
Their all of living? Who can not like to
Unto a future life to examine
Discrepancies in this.

Is there no law,
No pitying compact, no humane code
Drawn bird and vassal, which the King of all,
With just lips noted? He who when the earth
Lay seething from the deluge, deign'd to make
Covenant with man and beast.

His Book
Reveals with commendation him who shows
Mercy unto the speechless animal
That own his sway. So, may we ever strive,
By kind commendation, to enhance
Their servitude who than in lowly guise,
Subordinate and patient, do our will,
Encouraging their virtues, and, perchance,
Finding their teachers of Heaven.
Enduring love, or dumbness gratitude.
Imperial, N. Y., Feb. 1861.

* In one of our visits to Les Jardins des Plantes, in Paris, a large, handsome elephant, from Africa, appeared before us, and audibly running within the premises. The children of the pair of the keeper were playing in the area, and one of them fell down. As the child appeared to be hurt, the elephant lifted the child with the trunk, took it to the keeper, and then returned to his own apartment.—Mrs. L. H. S.

† Dr. L. Bevan, the benevolent Friend of Philadelphia, who distinguished by great kindness to the sunken Friendless, once, on a cold winter's day, found a poor boy in the street, who had no overcoat, nor a hat, nor shoes, nor stockings. He took him home, bathed, and very neighbors, then morning, with a new suit of clothes, and sent him to school, where he made rapid progress. He gave them a paragraph of beginning, and he immediately called the mother, who was bending upon her knees, and thanked her for the gift of her son. The mother never could be reclaimed. When she had children, she sold them, who very gladly parted, and I was delighted with this example of good order and family discipline that with them.

VASCO PERES,
THE COOPER OF ALCOBAÇA.

BY A NEW CONTRIBUTOR.

CHAPTER IX.

"Cut thick sticks a good many more to make it good."

During the foregoing conversation between the brother and sister in the wood of the castle, another of a very different nature was taking place in the upper part of the same stronghold. The Lord of Valverde was in his private apartment—that was mentioned in the commencement of Chapter IV.—walking up and down with impatient strides, when the door opened, and Fernão Rodrigues entered.

This man, whom we cursorily introduced to the 5th chapter, was short, thick, and bulged. The low, flat, receding forehead, and the wide, ugly mouth, extending almost from ear to ear, gave the countenance a peculiarly repulsive, even unnatural aspect, resembling more the visage of the serpent. Nothing was known of his origin—perhaps he knew little of it himself—and he had been in the employ of Cabreira some time before that war, in the latter had found him very useful as an agent in transactions of a doubtful nature. The Chief had conferred to make himself so necessary to his master, that on marrying for love to now commanded, the brute had succeeded in getting him placed over the crossbowmen with the title of cadel.

"Well, Fernão, what comfort dost thou bring?" asked Cabreira, eagerly, as the man made his appearance.

"Good and bad," was the reply.

"And which is the bad?"

"This: that there is no trading the monk. I passed some of the afternoon in friendly conbabulation, and was soon on excellent terms with Frei Bernardo; but all to no purpose. Several of the brothers are absent, and so many have been going in and out during the afternoon, that it were easier to pick out an ash, a thrice, from among a thousand snakes, than to discover this monk in the midst of so many in the same garment."

"Well, and how about the other business? Didst thou manage to shift any money in the coppers?"

"Yes; I contrived with a few of them, and satisfied myself that they have no misgivings of the real motive of your descent on Alcoa last night. They suppose that you really and truly suspected treachery; but they are vehement in maintaining that your suspicions were groundless."

"Good," answered Cabreira; "and now, before we treat of other matters, I have a full piece of news for thee, Fernão."

"Good news is too scarce now-a-days not to be dwelt on with eager ears and grateful heart," said Fernão, who, seeing that Cabreira had seated himself, came and sat down on a stool without awaiting an invitation.

"Thou knowest that the cooper's possessions are mine?"

"Thou you told me some hours since," replied Fernão.

"That I have just taken possession of them according to the forms of law?"

"This was a matter of course."

"Hence, they are mine beyond dispute?"

"Undoubtedly; and the estates of Roma are yours, and your fortune is made; but I am not in what this concerns me, noble sir," remarked Fernão, in a snarling tone, and with a smile meant to convey the idea that he thought himself ill-treated.

"Hear me, man: I intend to make thee a donation of Vasco's property."

"Ah! that alters the case," cried Fernão, his mouth expression changing into one of delight; "you were ever liberal, senhor, ere your cabaleiro was low, and now that is of ghost."

"Can you doubt of it, senhor?"

"In so doing thou wouldst serve thyself likewise; nay, it is a necessity, if thou have a mind to profit by that which I have just given thee."

"What is to be done, senhor? I shall always know my devotion to your interests."

"Why, in truth, Fernão, we must take a calm survey of matters, and have recourse to strengthen every weak point, and render that safe which is still insecure."

"Most undoubtedly."

"For the present everything prospers; all my plans have succeeded admirably."

"Even beyond your expectation," added Fernão Rodrigues.

"But the future! There are two modes of viewing it: Castile may triumph, or Dom João d'Avis may send them across the frontier as a mere something spudder than they came. In the first event, all goes well with us. For, although I should have to renounce the estates of Roma, which would be returned to Dona Elvira, and she compelled by the king to give her hand to Diogo Alvares Pereira, yet the confiscated estates of the constable, which would satisfying the calls of nature, which, however, cannot go unheeded much longer, and so, be thou on the alert. But is it passing strange this strong, lale, hairy cooper should have lived like a monk on Friday. Thinkest thou he is in love with any of the village maidens, Fernão?"

"In sooth, I know not; senhor; it may well be, though; albeit nous has his pretty sister have sought admittance to him," replied Rodrigues.

"Be this as it may, he must needs soon address himself to his pitcher. See to this, Fernão, that we have him off as soon as may be; I have other work for you, and have no hands hereon."

While Dom Garcia was speaking, foot-falls were heard in the passage, and a moment afterwards there was a loud knock at the door.

"Come in," said Cabreira.

"A messenger from His Highness seeks you, senhor," said the attendant as he opened the door.

"Admit him, presently," replied the lord of Valverde.

The man, as soon as the servant had departed, Cabreira said to Rodrigues, with a look that betrayed concern:

"Quick to advance, no doubt; if they are to be acted upon without delay, we shall be in a rare plight."

"It would play the drama with our projects."

"Mark me, Fernão; if we must needs depart forthwith, I shall leave thee here; then knowest wherefore," said the lord of Valverde, hurriedly, as the sound of approaching steps fell upon his ear.

An officer made his appearance; his garments were covered with dust and his face dripping with perspiration, indicating hard riding; for, notwithstanding the early hour, the sun was already very powerful, and had been for some time.

"What tidings, fair sir? How is it with his highness and our gallant friends?" inquired Cabreira, with a courteous smile.

"All are in the best possible spirits, senhor; I was charged by his highness to put this paper in your hand;" and so saying, the officer delivered a document of thick, substantial paper, such as was then in use.

"With your leave, senhor," said Valverde, as he retired to the embrasure of one of the windows.

Fernão Rodrigues and the royal messenger kept their eyes fixed on Cabreira, while he cut the ribbon which secured the document, and perused the contents of the letter. After reading for a few moments, he was seen to start; but the officer observed no further indication of surprise in the countenance of the experienced courtier, though Fernão, whose eye was more practised in interpreting his superior's expression, thought the latter's face had turned a shade paler. With the utmost of the composure which Dom Garcia had ever himself, Rodrigues augured wrongly of from that his circumstances.

"What were the king's orders respecting myself and my men?" inquired the lord, in a tone, of the officer, as he finished reading the letter, which he folded and placed in a spare.

"To return to Porto-de-Mos forthwith; with your good leave, I will take some little refreshment, and depart."

"Then, gray toll His Highness that his commands shall be obeyed to the utmost of my power. God speed you on your journey, senhor; present my humble duty to my sire devotion to his royal person. On thee, Fernão, and see that the gentleman be well cared for until he leave the castle."

On his return, Rodrigues found Dom Garcia striding up and down the room much agitated, and with all the signs of extreme perplexity, which he made no attempt to conceal.

"Here is a goodly business! a fine upset to all that I had so carefully matured!" exclaimed he.

"What is the matter, noble sir?" inquired Fernão anxiously.

"The matter is, that both prisoners are free," replied Cabreira, gnashing his teeth.

"Free!"

"Ay, they are to be set at liberty by express command of His Highness."

"By the saints! we are discovered!" exclaimed Fernão, his face assuming a ghastly hue, and his features receded from their pale, parchment-colored cheeks, while his whole frame became violently convulsed.

"Coward!" cried Dom Garcia, with scorn, "is this the courage, senhor, to aspire to thine; your birth and rank will save your neck; but what becomes of the villain who is found out in the wretch, rubbing his throat convulsively, "and why should I play the scathe? at first the same apprehension occurred to me."

"I admire your calmness; you showed no such composure when you entered this castle at the heads of the Moors. And prey what has occasioned this?"

"Then shall know. The king's letter runs that upon the cooper's first appearance before him, he considers the confession of the estates of Dona Elvira restored to possession of the rights of her wealth, she can do little or no harm; and that the cooper's property is to be given to her for her uncle, he would not trust her too harshly, wherefore he ordered the prisoners delivered to Vasco Peres, His Highness directs that he be surrendered to the Abbot of Alcobaça, with whom he is under that he cannot may set he his case according to his own judgment; as he, the abbot, had also a complaint against the seizure of his vassal, requesting that he be delivered to him, and promising that he would stand surety for the cooper's good behavior."

"Surety, Vasco's property will never be worse," said Rodrigues, sullenly.

"Not if we can help it; this day take possession thereof. The king; in the same letter, confirms the grant he made of the possessions of Dona Elvira and Vasco Peres. Lastly he commands me to set out for Porto-de-Mos without delay; he himself sets out from Porto-de-Mos on long before we can start hence. It is therefore clear that the king entertains no suspicions against me. Now, Fernão, begin with the guards, and ask His Highness, and this accounts for his testy towards the niece. As to Vasco Peres, the abbot has something to say touching the king's proceeding, in not having consulted him before deciding a case in which one of his vassals was concerned; and, though the sovereign has a perfect right to act by his own authority in a case of high treason, yet no doubt he preferred to give this mark of deference to the proud and powerful prelate, whom he could not afford to annoy just now."

In connection with the bitter part of this speech, it may be well to remark, that at the beginning of the struggle between Dom João of Avis and the King of Castile, the Abbot of Alcobaça, Dom João d'Ornellas, had shown par-

PLOTTING MISCHIEF.

fell to me, would well nigh compensate me for the loss of those of Roma."

"But if it so turn out, how about this property of Vasco Peres?" asked Cabreira, incredulously.

"Fear nought," replied Cabreira, with a smile at the fellow's anxious concern about his own interest; "thou shalt retain the whole. I could soon convince the king of Castile that the cooper was no partisan of his, and that the reception I brought against him was only a feint to get into all the way. And remember, if ever I am Peres would be the last to grimsey me in this."

"I know the feigning; I myself rather have a rood of land than brand himself a traitor, or deny the truth. Now if, on the other hand, Castile should succumb and Portugal gain the day, our business would put on another face, and here's the pinch. But all can be provided for. Vasco Peres, I know, is mortal, has sought hurting vague suspicions to bear him out against me, and by the information then had just given me, I perceive he has not even communicated these suspicions to his workmen. This is one danger less to be guarded against; and those men need give us no further care; they could only injure that Vasco had them in the saints, and, if he be out of the way, some remain to explain the matter, thereof, eclipse—"

"Of course Vasco Peres must be got rid of by some means or other," said Rodrigues, interrupting Cabreira.

"Not only he," observed the latter, "but also Dona Elvira. For should the Portuguese prevail, the king will most certainly look into this affair; but, if Castile win the day, Dona Roma could easily destroy all my work."

"And yet how came it that the coopers were at the quinta when we arrived? Some one must see in if our scheme, by some fortunate coincidence, has come to much truth?"

"Tush, man!" rejoined Cabreira, "thou touchest from another quarter. Some meddling monk, who might pass for Satan himself. However, this does not affect the present question. We have arranged matters in such a way, that if the king should ever hear, in a direct way, of the duty understanding with João Gonçalves, he will know it is what I have stated it to be, that the monk could do no more than create misgivings, and even this I doubt."

"But the coopers, how came they to be at Alcoba?" said Fernão, still unable to account for this.

"To clear to say they were induced to go thither at the monk's persuasion, who probably saw our troop on the way."

"All this looks much as if we were entangled in a mesh, senhor," observed Fernão, whose brain, though full of craft, was not fertile in it with any serious difficulty.

"Nay, I think not; if we can put Dona Elvira and Vasco out of the way, all will go right. If Don João of Avis triumph, my services would require some guerdon; my skill in warfare is admitted, and I should not fail to make it still more evident were I to see the enemy show a decided weakness. Then, as for handing over the tie to Dom João, and it must not be denied that the bastard will end the dispute, my victory would undoubtedly secure the crown to the Grand-Master, who would then be in a position to be done along the frontiers for the next two or three seasons—and that is all that would be required: The king would have a care lest he did aught that might aggrieve me. Now, if Dona Elvira also existed death, we'll suppose—this relicts the matter. The heirs to the estates are all distant relatives, and it is an absolute certainty that no attention would be paid to their pretensions of her majesty."

"I would suggest an easier course, and quite as sure in its consequences," said Fernão.

"Thou wouldst show more intellect than I have given thee credit for, Fernão," replied Cabreira, incredulously.

"Why help the king in your power; convince her that she has nothing to hope for the future, and offer yourself to her again—credit me, she would sooner marry you than pass a life of wretchedness."

"Is this, then, thy great expedient? Thou must, forsooth, take me for something of a fool, to imagine that it had not occurred to me before. But there is an insurmountable obstacle to this. Dona Elvira hates me, and nothing would induce her to consent."

"Then force her to it," replied Fernão, with a significant smile.

"Impossible; there were too many witnesses to my oath—such a course would defeat me. I do not propose saving Dona Elvira's life alone is in my custody. I say there is not one thing to be done. Both she and Vasco Peres must be disposed of in some way. Dost thou apprehend, Fernão?"

"It should seem that there can be but one way to effect your object," replied Fernão, without committing himself.

"Then must be confessed that they may neither speak, see, nor hear for the future."

"Death alone could effect this in the present juncture; is it what you mean to infer?" asked the man, with a slight start of surprise.

"Thou hast hit it, Fernão, and what is thy opinion of it?"

"I think with you, senhor; it is the only means left of serving the interest."

"And now the chief difficulty lies in doing it speedily, without leaving any traces of the deed. In this I expect aid from thee, Fernão, for then I have been absent more than 24 hours."

"I see no impossibility in doing the thing speedily."

"Speak, then; then knowest I am no pigeon in my reversal."

Rodrigues remained silent for a moment, then, after looking round him with an anxious, doubtful gaze, which required the address to still more so, he said in a half whisper: "There is a compound I know of, which makes a corpse within three days: its effects are infallible, while the symptoms are mild in appearance, defying detection, and capable of misleading the most keen in his diagnosis."

"This is just the thing we want. But how is it to be done? Not through the monk, I will observe as this; or even were it possible, might it not lead to discovery?"

"Leave this to my care. I should not have mentioned the matter to you until I had prepared. I can administer the potion to both, this evening."

"*This expeds do Lisbador!*" exclaimed Cabreira, hastily, and uttering his favorite oath, "I would not have thought it of thee, Fernão, and both die thine in the castle; it would, to a surety, cast suspicion on us."

"We must try, then, to devise some other mode; but I see no way to avoid suspicion."

"I have it!" cried Cabreira, after reflecting a little; "I shall send them to Porto-de-Mos in close custody, with thy trusted crossbowmen, who know to what end they are to be employed. Then, as it is ascertained that Vasco Peres has taken ill, and that Dona Elvira is not well, they are shortly to leave the castle, which will thus remain in the hands of Rodrigues, under color of our absence would present a most favorable opportunity for the escape of the two from their imaginary conspirators. Thou wouldst of course remain at São Martinho with the prisoner until they arrived."

"An excellent idea! a most admirable contrivance!" exclaimed Rodrigues, with a frightful grin. "All is now connected, so as to preclude any suspicion of foul play, because but one point unguarded, and still open to danger."

"Ay, Fernão, and what is that, in thy opinion?"

"Precisely," replied Fernão; "the eye on the monk. He has induced the cooper to go to Alcoa, whence it follows that he could fully have prevented the latter from the perpetration of conspiring."

"Right," rejoined Cabreira; "it were undoubtedly to be preferred that he too were out of the way; but this is impossible; and, moreover, when Dona Elvira and Vasco Peres are no more, the business would not be scrutinized. I am of too much importance to the king, for him to think of resuming the grant he has made me without the most evident proofs of Dona Elvira's innocence. Thou the monk could not further than speak for Frei Bernardo's absence at Alcoba; he discovered my intention of going there, and I could not, for the purpose I had in view, nor can he prove that I did not suspect the lady's treachery."

"Think you not there is fear of his having seen the two conversing together with the prisoners?"

"It is impossible; I examined every corner about the old windmill; had there been anyone in it, they could not have escaped me. Besides I have not yet mentioned to thee a circumstance which reassures me entirely with respect to such a possibility. That which first drew my attention to the monk were a few words he whispered in my ear last night at the quinta; the words were these: '*Beware, Don Garcia! I come from the Castilian camp. Juan of Castile has offered the king reward to betray thy master and pass over to us.*' Now, this speaks for itself. There was no word of discretion at Leiria; it must have been reserved as the coup that an intention existed of sending João Gonçalves on such an errand, and the monk got his information there. But what is the answer to my knowledge?"

"Yet, how could he anticipate your design of going to the outside of Alcoa," pursued Fernão, "for only I explain this, in that, being apprised of the proposition which had been offered to me made, the monk, after returning to Alcobaça, must have watched my movements, and was under no apprehension from that last night. The lateness of the hour must have made him conjecture that all was not right; and on perceiving that we were treading the road to Alcoba, he very naturally hastened to communicate the intelligence to Vasco Peres. This is probable, for the cooper arrived some time after us, and must have reached the monkies by the river side. No, no, be sure I'm right, for he is no aggrieved danger from the monk. The only means he had of injuring me, was by reporting to His Highness the news he brought from Leiria; but fortunately the king is persuaded that I never for a moment harbored the thought of betraying his cause."

"You must admit, however, that mystery surrounds this monk. His sudden appearance at the quinta, and his extraordinary escape, are not but crude wonder."

"It is passing strange, how he succeeded in concealing himself so quickly and so effectually. Nevertheless, we may defy him to do us harm."

The two villains separated, quite satisfied that their schemes would prove successful, according to them the undisputed possession of the property of their intended victims.

CHAPTER X.

"From a fair day a night."

Early on the following morning, the lord of Valverde was again pacing his chamber; there was no difference in his dress from that of the day before, as over and soon he directed his eyes towards the door. At length it opened, and his confidant entered the room.

"How now, Fernão?" exclaimed Dom Garcia eagerly, perceiving at a stride or two in advance, "has the morning brought us better luck?"

"Not much, senhor; we have to report that neither of the prisoners have eaten; Frei Bernardo excepted."

Cabreira uttered a fearful oath, which need not be described.

"This is an unlucked for balk to our plans," continued Rodrigues: "it is not so much the delay, as the precautions necessary to prevent the monks from tasting the rejected food, and which, if continued in, may lead to exclusion. Last night I directed the food to be left with them till morning; but not a particle has been touched. I have just ordered that no other be prepared for Vasco, remarking that it was quite good enough for one of his sort, and that he would find it so when the cravings of hunger come upon him. He replied that he would not eat only from the vessel, I caused what had been set before her to be brought away, and assigned to the poor whole in the corridor. Therefore, as it by accident, the woman who was on her way to the kitchen with it. I then explored her to return and remain with the lady, recommending her to partake of a soup as soon Frei Bernardo should signify a wish to eat, after asking what food he would like to have; and when she was gone I hastily gathered up the scattered victuals, of which, indeed, there was but a small quantity, and her brute can get at them."

"I see you have acted with thy wonted caution, Fernão. But I marvel at this abstemiousness: it will be many hours before they have refreshed themselves."

"I begin to suspect that their guardian angels have revered them," remarked Rodrigues unseemly.

"Pshaw, man; dost thou give belief to such old wives' tales?" rejoined Cabreira, tauntingly. "Some other reason must be sought for alluding to matters beyond our scope. Let our wicked intentions be counted to work on men, and not the higher powers. Bless me, the holy martyrs of Verissimo, Marinha and Julia! the morning we shall have to render in full enough as it is; therefore, towards those of a higher spheres I would only increase our guilt too-fold, and provoke their amend ire," said Fernão Rodrigues solemnly, for with his arch-villainy was strangely blended a large dose of superstition.

"Well, well, this is not the question now," answered Cabreira with a smile of contempt. "I marvel not so much at the lady's fast; those fair creatures are no doubt formed of a finer texture than we men. A large share of their nourishment is ministered to them by the heart, while the physical necessities are less urgent than our's. Dona Elvira must be yet too sensitive alive to all that has befallen her, to think of

tuality for the latter, whom he furnished with provisions on his army when Don Juan of Castile passed through Alcolea on his march against Lisbon, before the siege. But later, when the Grand-Master of Avis was proclaimed king at Coimbra—not quite four months preceding the date of our story—the abbot had taken sides with the newly elected king; and a day or two before the revels I am now recording, he had sent his brother, Martim d'Ornellas, with a considerable body of troops to join the royal army. It was therefore quite natural that the king should take kind not to displease so powerful a personage as stood at the head of affairs.

"All this is very plausible, senhor," said Fernão Lopes, not at all satisfied with the explanation, in as far as his own interests were concerned; "all this is very plausible, and I make no doubt but you take a correct view of the matter; yet whilst I greatly fear that Vasco Peres will prevail upon my lord the abbot, who knows him well, to obtain from the king the restitution of his property."

"Never fear, Fernão; His Highness will think twice before he do aught to indispose me. But granting he did, thou shouldst not be the loser; I would more than make good the loss to thee."

"Well, senhor," rejoined Fernão, better pleased, "I am satisfied. When you are content, I am bound to be so, likewise."

"But I am far from being contented, Fernão. Here is my scheme suddenly become impracticable; for in a few minutes from now I shall be out of my power—I cannot thus consent to give up for lost; some other means must be devised."

"To bring about her death?"

"Precisely."

"With your leave, I'll make bold to say that the business is an easier one to deal with now, than ere-while."

"I see not why; here must then administer and minister to her after the will of the potentate?"

"She need not partake the fee by poison; there are other ways of dispatching people, and making them quit of it. Then, for the rest of the vestiges, that simplicity will not so easily attach to you; for will rigorous it had you had the will of making away with her, you would have effected it while she was within your reach."

"This is true in one sense; but here's the rub, how can it be brought about so as to preclude the possibility of detection? Methinks the shyness excused or prove a failure?"

"If you are content to leave the matter in my hands, Dona Elvira shall have breathed her last ere you shall awaken, without fear of discovery," said Rodrigues in a tone of assurance.

"What makes thee so positive?"

"Leave this to me."

"Will thou give me a surety that under no circumstances the deed can be traced home to me?"

"I repeat, you need give yourself no concern, Lumbria now makes his exit. Still, there is no harm as great an inducement to guard against satisfaction to yourself, like the rest."

"Good, I know thy discretion, and to it I entrust the result. Matters, I dare not promise but both can."

"If a choice must needs be made, look to it that Dona Elvira come not, as I am the greatest obstacle in my path. Vasco might prove troublesome to Zenith, and to me in my designs of egress, once we get rid of the Lady of Rosa. To be free, and get back to Portugal, is probably would, then knowest my agreement to compensate thee; so have no more about this."

"There is one thing indispensable, and without which nothing could be done."

"Name it."

"Money."

"How much is required?"

"Ten doubloons will do for the present."

"I'll give them to thee now."

And if all go well, almost as much again may be needed."

"The sum will be paid; thou shalt have the twenty doubloons presently. But beware, Fernão, how thou open thyself to another, for I see this money is sad for thee; if failure ensue, I myself would wring a confession from thy lentrement."

"I see and bind to this danger, senhor; but to this sufficed, that none can reveal more than I say know."

The Lord of Valverde appeared satisfied with the reply of his hideous agent, and the conversation later delivered him the amount. Cabrales then gave directions for the following day to Fernão, and commanded Vasco Peres to be removed from prison and given up to his abbot.

CHAPTER XI.

"When hate is hot, wait a spell."

A great change had taken place in Elvira's situation since last we saw her; then, only a few hours before, she was at liberty, surrounded the embrace of vast estates; now she was a close prisoner, deprived of all her worldly means, and would doubtless soon be forgotten, even were she to be released; as least, so she fancied. Then she was, in many respects, but an inexperienced girl. Till within a few months, she had been sequestered in a convent, and from there she was married; and the short time which had elapsed since she had been passed in seclusion with a boy little calculated to school her in the art of life or tear of the shoals and quicksands that lie in the path of man; indeed, the last fifty-eight hours had been to her more than one day, the opening, as it were, of a new world.

She had experience enough to appreciate the horror of her present position. She stood accused of a crime from the consequences of which she had heard but very few escaped after denunciation. She was innocent, the victim of foul slander and calumny; but was she a solitary exception? Many, she had understood, who had received their credit and station in the world through the intercession of influential friends; but whose fall she to hear of, as soon as her back was gone? What influence had a forlorn damsel, isolated by reason of the death of her only country, which had in a great degree dissolved the ties of social intercourse, to hope to bear against the patronage and consideration possessed by her foe and despoiler? She was entirely unacquainted with the king, whom she had seen once or twice at most, but without being known to him. She threw no blame upon him; she knew from report that he was liberal and amiable. She was aware that he was in a critical position, owing to his powerful foes surrounded on all sides by traitors or lukewarm partisans (which fact was given out as the time by the chroniclers), *that all the lords of Avis of Avis save none*, except one, this one proving to be Nuno Alvarez Pereira, Nuno d'Avis Portelo, forced by civil to their captivity, and, having sought to give away what he took from others. It was quite natural he should take from those upholding a foreign power. Could it be expected that at such a crisis he would find the time to investigate fully every case? Nay, was it to be wondered at that his mind was easily open to suspicion? Then, as to the failure. Elvira saw but little reason to hope. She suspected that it would be long ere public affairs were sufficiently settled for her to obtain a hearing, and then the scene would have shifted; she might probably find it difficult to produce conclusive proofs of her innocence in opposition to the insidious manœuvres of the Lord of Valverde; possible circumstances might be brought forward which, even granting her innocence, would necessitate condemnation in the first instance, would prove ample to get the seal to be accomplished first. Such was the train of thought which Elvira indulged, after she had recovered from the first shock attendant upon her sudden reverse of fortune.

But amidst all these glimmerings of an uncertain future, ever and anon there shone through the opening of the gloom the face of Pedro Alvarez Pereira, and then the new handsome features of the ruin she had wantonly brought upon a fellow-creature.

We may better conceive that describe the feelings that arose upon Elvira when the news of her liberation was suddenly broken to her. During the first moments of surprise, the joy of the word; the blood went to and from her cheeks; and she was almost ready to faint away, when a tribute seemed to refuse to perform their functions. The effect was mainly attributable to the weak state of her nerves, which had been for a long time tried, and severely exercised by a train from want of nourishment.

"And Vasco Peres, he is his office?" asked she at length, with a certain eagerness of tone.

"He is at liberty, I am told, senhora; he received to have him transferred to the custody of my lord the abbot," replied the alcaide.

Elvira's face fell; but she murmured, as if speaking to herself, "Another friend gone from me. This was, because, being acquainted with the world, slightest hint intercessions in his behalf might prove successful.

And where am I to go? Can I return to Alcolea?"

"Nay, lady," answered the officer in a tone of commiseration, "I have received orders to say that he would have done himself the honor of attending you personally, but that business of he made you, and charged me to inform you that he is to be present at the examination of the case, so it is to none of those places that were once yours."

"Ah! I see; I am no longer a prisoner, yet little better; dismissed—naked, indeed, into the world!" said Elvira with a bitter smile. "Yet the better for you, I'll assure thee," added she, under the spur of my present jailer. Pray lead on, senhor, to the gate."

She uttered not another syllable, but followed the man with whom she had been so long familiar, but the latter was obliged to quicken his pace, and hurried on in order to escape the compassionate breath in his hated place; she fled like one that seeks to open the air of heaven, and was not to drink in the poison floating in the air. In the court, were a number of soldiers conversing in groups or lounging about with listless attentions, and Elvira, with the modesty of her sex, shrunk from the gaze of her late foes; but the latter might not be made a target for their bold glances, as the alcaide, who had preceded her, she moved a high, drew a long breath, and would have fallen, but for the support of her guide, who been caught in the arms of one who stood there unperceived.

"God be praised! that I see you free again, sweet lady, I have been wishing myself by your hold an hour."

It was the truster and loving Violante. Elvira, whose heart had been oppressed for so many months of grief upon the loss of her father's companion and gave a free passage to her tears; but her utterance was choked by the same cause, it seemed so long since she had any one near her to whom she could unburden.

"What brought thee hither, dearest Violante?" asked she, at last.

"To see you."

"And is this now change in my affairs become known to you?"

"Nay, be patient; come with me and you shall learn all. Where is your horse, senhor?"

"And whither am I to go? I have no home now, dearest girl, other than that of my father."

"Have no anxiety on that score, senhor; all is prepared for your reception. Not here, I suppose; but nowhere will you meet with a hurtful welcome. Rua Belmonte, the house of Ribeiro now makes free to offer you as much. Do you understand? Or must I explain more?"

"And pray what am I now, that I should show aught of pride in my demeanor? The world has taught me more in the last few days than trouble no one for alms while he has hands to work; but, alas! what have females to do in the art of charity?" Elvira sighed, and her lovely countenance assumed a look of melancholy that for born as would have touched the hardest heart with pity. Violante could restrain herself no longer.

"Be of good cheer, sweet lady," said she, "you have more friends than you wot of; if some can but sympathize with your misfortunes, there are others, at least one, who may find means to extricate you completely from your misfortunes, count," and the tender girl took Elvira's hand and led her away.

After reaching the bottom of the declivity which the fortress stood, they had not far to walk to go; as Rua's house was among those that bordered the great square in front of the monastery. It was built of stone, and was three stories one story on a level with the ground. The first room was unfurnished and deprived of windows, receiving light only through the square opening in the upper part of the door which led into the kitchen, which, like the outer room, could only boast of the bare ground. Steps to the right of the kitchen was a third bedroom, very small, but with a window, which looked into the sleeping apartments were likewise provided. The furniture in the outer room was in accordance with the place, composed merely of a small deal table, a few benches, and a common wooden trunk or chest, resting on two small stands, and taking up more than a third of the space. And notwithstanding the deficiency of comforts, which was not felt in a climate that invited people to live more in the open air than indoors, everything bore a neat and tidy appearance, while the bare, unplastered walls were as white as milk, from frequent whitewashing.

Standing at the entrance of the cot, as if waiting for her guests, was Pereguira, the wife of Rua Martins, a nice, kindly-looking woman, of about forty-five years of age, poorly, but cleanly clad. As soon as she perceived the two young persons crossing the square, she advanced to meet them.

"*Oh, minha rica senhora!*" cried Pereguira, seizing Elvira's hand, which she pressed to her lips; "this is, indeed, a joyful day for those who have so often felt your bounty. O, my heart is full, but I will not speak, for my woman hopes to shed tears.

"Woe, woe me, my good Pereguira," for Elvira knew her, as in truth she knew all the neighboring peasants by name; "you see I come to claim a small corner of your house. Will you give me hospitality for awhile?" and the tears, which had repressed, had her tone was gentle.

"Bless me, lady! Is it for you to ask? Is it not for us to beg of you to rest in our poor home for as long as you will?"

"Nay, my good friend, I am no longer what I was."

"Hush, lady, hush! speak not thus! In our eyes you are the same as ever you were. But come, this trailing air will do you no good; you are weak, senhora!" and so saying, the good woman showed the way into her little house.

Then, sitting upon a stool, with his elbow resting upon the table, sat a monk: it was frei Diogo Lobo, the brother whom Elvira had seen, but they had been described to her as very different, moreover, a sort of instinct precisely contrary to that which she had often thus had a serious moist himself. As they entered, the latter made a sign to Pereguira, who hurriedly drew back and left the house.

"Frei Diogo!" Ah, I see. It was you, good father, who reclaimed me from the hands of the law, and brought me to this asylum," cried Elvira, advancing hastily, and kissing the hem of the monk's garment.

"It was the king, my daughter, who commanded me to bring you here," said Frei Lobo, giving his benediction and rising from his seat. "Pereguira, you will see that the room is decently suite, and Elvira perceived a tray trickling from the wife's eyes, as she quitted the room, received to have him transferred to the custody of my lord the abbot," replied the alcaide.

Elvira's face fell; but she murmured, as if speaking to herself, "Another friend gone from me. This was, because, being acquainted with the world, slightest hint intercessions in his behalf might prove successful.

And where am I to go? Can I return to Alcolea?"

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able a person as the son of the head of the great banking house of Mansell and Company. But there was one person who doubted it—Captain Riddle, the commander of the packet-boat that brought him from Calais; he had his log-book to prove that Jasper had crossed the Channel a day sooner than he had stated, in ample time to be in London on the night of the crime. The fellow saw that money was to be made of the fact, and hastened up to London.

In vain the guilty man denied the accuracy of his statement, sought to persuade the captain he had mistaken the date; Captain Green, secure in his own recollection of the day, it was of no material consequence. The only answer he received was his visitor pointing to the log.

They came now to an understanding—the accusing page was torn out and burnt, but not till a considerable sum had been paid.

On becoming head of the firm, Riddle was frequently employed by his former passenger—who never lost sight of him. The baronet proved as good as an annuity to him.

"I am passing beyond the reach of human justice," he exclaimed the day before, "I am still within its grasp. The opinion of mankind, their executions and contempt, is a few brief hours. Will no merciful man then do me what that whitens over my grave. With you," he continued, "it is different; you are a strong man—have yourself to thank for your ill-gotten gains. Your conscience may be at ease, you have not the gallows."

"For Heaven's sake," exclaimed the horrified wretch, "don't utter that dreadful word!"

"Why not?" demanded the hardened guilty. "Nothing like familiarising yourself with the idea. You have been startled," he added, with a burst of fiend-like mirth, for the recollection tickled him, "and have watched the black hands of the wretch trembling at the seahlell's foot, despairing of a heaven and torn—as has the hopeless glance he cast upon you as you stood to receive your fee, and claim, a vengeful monkey, an incarnate lie, whose real place was beside him. An ex-shrift!" he continued, "the thousands does not often try his craft upon such subjects. How consoling the english will be; how merciful the officials; how zealous your successors in office. The recollection that the thing they have just hunted into eternity was once even the golden chain and purple rag which damp their appetites at the breakfast."

As the period we are writing of the deeds of London and their visitors breathed the thought directly after an execution. The custom, we believe, of late years has been abolished.

During this dreadful description, Harper sat, covering his face with his hands, in speechless rage and, hopeless of escape, his teeth chattered with fear, making the only sound we could now give utate—the music of revenge—to the ears of the speaker. Despair at last served his heart with the semblance of courage, and, starting to his feet, he exclaimed:

"You are cruel, Sir Jasper! you dare not."

"Dare not?" repeated the baronet, contemptuously

"No! you have a son."

"Who has disobeyed me," replied the dying man, with singular calmness; "whom obstinacy has reduced to borrow his wretched pin-money—dared, conceited girl, whom you call your daughter, has caused my death."

His former confederate in crime must have been greatly moved by the labour of terror which have exercised the insulting description of his darling child.

"You have daughters," he urged.

"Who are rich," said the farmer. "Marriage changes manner."

"And a wife," added Harper.

"There too I have an advantage over you," replied the dying man. "I am four years my only despise mine."

His visitor regarded him for several minutes in silence, collecting on his own extinct position all the while. Gradually it appeared less desperate to him. Bread and butter he could earn, and cause the baronet had received both to hate and despise him, he could not believe that for so inessatic revenge, he would refuse all offers of accommodation, and heap upon his children's name an inheritance of infamy.

"Jasper," he began, "I confess I might have used the power circumstances once gave me over you more mercifully, but I was impelled by the desire of allying our families, uniting the fortunes we have acquired. It is for you to refuse my generosity than I did."

"Generosity! pitiless, savage, and coarse as pitiless."

"Name your conditions," added Harper. "I place myself without reservation in your hands; submit to whatever terms you may dictate."

"Sing that bell," said the banker.

Harper immediately complied.

It was answered by John Ledger. The old man had a bewildered look. He could not comprehend how an ominous-looked-for event could have occurred to any respectable firm. A bank-registry would not have appointed such a visitor.

"You will find a private account-book in that desk," said the employer, pointing to the one he meant.

The clubber opened it mechanically.

"Make out the account of Mr. Harper," continued the baronet, "examine it, and bring it to me as soon as you have finished it."

"Directly, Sir Jasper."

"And send for a Bow street officer."

"Thomas is gone on an errand, evening upon the premises," observed Mr. Ledger.

"Very well, that will do."

At the mention of a Bow street officer the countenance of his visitor changed, and he began to look round him uneasily.

"The money you have extorted from me at various times," said Sir Jasper, "must be repaid."

"Agreed."

"It amounts to fifty thousand pounds."

"Yes, probably, about that sum."

"Repaid, with interest."

"Agreed," repeated Harper, somewhat more slowly than before, as if the word had been wrong by torture from his unwilling lips.

"And the letter, together with the two notes for a thousand pounds each, which you have so long held in terror over me, the given up."

"That also I consent to."

"You have lied with you," observed the banker. "You hesitate. I will not give you time to battle a lie. I am resolved to have them. The bangman would not come without his cord; nor you without the instruments of extortion. Remember that I have no time for child's play."

At the allusion to the last officer of the law all hesitation on the part of Mr. Harper disappeared, and he answered straightforwardly and promptly

"I have them."

"I knew as," ejaculates the banker, with a smile.

Nothing passed between the speakers till John Ledger returned with the account. It amounted to fifty-three thousand pounds.

"Without interest?" said his master, when he had finished reading it.

"Without interest, Sir Jasper."

"Calculate that."

A few moments sufficed. Although the accounts were rather complicated, the money having been advanced at various times, the experienced cashier went rapidly through them.

"Exactly fifty-nine thousand pounds, seven-teen shillings, and eight pence, Sir Jasper."

"Draw bills at three, six, and nine months for the amount, in equal proportions," said his employer. "Return to your duties, and witness Mr. Harper's signature."

The bills were drawn and signed, the receipt, for, however, retaining them in his possession. The two partners in crime were then left by themselves.

"Harper," said the dying man, "security for security; hand me the notes, my letter, and the memorandum of the sum you have received."

It was a curious sight to witness the countenances of the men as the exchange occurred—each doubtful of the other till he grasped the proofs of his own safety—the dying the villain. The baronet thrust his into the open drawer in the table before him, and, with a spring-lock. His brother Elton walked deliberately towards the fire, and handed the forgotten one by one, dropped them into the flames, and stood by till they were consumed.

When the light blue vapor of the burning paper had ceased, and the last vestige was destroyed, he turned suddenly round, and, opening his arms, gazed with looks of mingled rage and despair upon his victim.

The latter smiled disdainfully.

"Murder!" he muttered.

"Forger!" said Jasper.

"You have spared me."

"Have you?"

"There is another world," whispered the life-wretch, glaring on the dying man with eyes that seemed to have forgotten how to weep—"yes, a hell!—recollect that—a hell!" he repeated, as if to impress the possibility upon him.

If the accounts of Clement Chambers fill the heart, he wishes to know, to escape the sole infliction of witnessing the pang it caused him; so the curiosity would

THE NEW YORK SPECTATOR.

OLD FOLKS

BY ALICE CARY.

Ah, don't be sorrowful, darling,
Just don't be sorrowful, pray;
Taking life year together, my dear,
There isn't more night than day!

'Tis rainy weather, my darling,
There's waves, they heavily run,
But taking the year together, my dear,
There isn't more cloud than sun!

We are old folks now, my darling,
Our heads they are growing gray;
But taking the year all round, my dear,
You will always find it May!

We have had our May, my darling,
And our roses, long ago;
And th' time of year is coming, my dear,
For th' silent nights and th' snow!

And God is God, my darling,
Of night as well as of day,
And we feel and know that we are so
Wherever he leads the way.

Ay God of the night, my darling—
Of th' night of death, so grim;
The pain that binds out of life, and ends,
In th' pain that leads to Him.

THE PIRATE CAPTAIN.

BY EMERSON BENNETT.

A venerable old lady sat rocking herself before a cheerful fire, with her eyes dreamily fixed upon the glowing coals, in which the latter could also see the familiar faces of by-gone days. Suddenly, over the smallest of the coals, there came a shadow of mingled dread and sorrow, and she muttered, half aloud:

"Ah! what of him? Is he living or dead? Merciful Heaven! what a destiny!"

"Grandma," said a pretty, fair-haired, blue-eyed little girl of ten, who sat at the old lady's feet, busy with her needle, "were you not going to tell me that story about the pirates? You know you promised to tell me some day; and I guess it's about some day now, isn't it?"

"Ah, my little dear," replied the grandmother, rousing up with a start, and fondly stroking down the hair of the child, "it is very strange that I should have been thinking of that man at this very moment!"

"What man, grandma?"

"The pirate captain."

"Oh, do tell me the story! won't you?"

"Well, dear, my destiny, as you call it, urges now as any time, for it is not always I care to think about it. But you must not tell it in my own way:

"From them, when I was about eighteen years of age, a young man, by the name of Walter Crawford, made me an offer of his hand. He was rather good-looking in feature, had a fine manly figure, was considered very respectable, and, on the whole, I liked him, though I will not say I ever had any violent passion for him. But he had for me, at least, as he said, and I confidently declared that if he failed to think his future with mine, he would be the most lonely and soul. I considered this very extravagant language, and told him as much; but he repeated it more than once, and confirmed it with an oath, which I did not like.

"However, my father, for some reason, had taken an unfair dislike to young Crawford, and said I should never marry him with his consent; and as I would not wed against his wishes, the affair ended in a dismissal of my passionate suitor, who parted from me in anger, and immediately left for ports unknown.

"Six years after that I married your grandfather, who at that time was master and part owner of a vessel trading between Boston, the West Indies, and different ports around the Gulf of Mexico and the Caribbean Sea. As he continued his voyages for several years after our marriage, I used occasionally to make the voyages with him. Our last voyage was made in the year 1835, and of something that happened then I am now going to tell you.

"At the time I now speak of, the navigation of the Gulf of Mexico and Indian seas, and contiguous waters, was a dangerous business for merchantmen and traders, owing to the hordes of pirates which infested that region. Your grandfather had several narrow escapes, and it was all the time uneasy for fear something would happen to him. When I was with him I was afraid, and when he left me at home I was miserable all the time of his absence.

"Well, one night, when about six hours' sail from Havana, on our last homeward voyage, your grandfather came down to me in the cabin, and reported all going well.

"A few hours more, my timid wife," he said, with a cheerful smile, 'and we shall be beyond even the apprehension of danger, and then I trust I shall see you yourself again, for really your dejected, anxious looks are enough to give one the blues.'

"'I will, for your sake, William, I will be more cheerful,' I replied; 'but when I think of the dangers we run, and when we have a storm, as I cannot help feeling nervous and frightened.'

"'Well, I cannot blame you, dear, all things considered; but as this is my last voyage, let us hope your fears will soon be overcome.' I will read you a chapter from the Bible, and then turn in, for I am very much fatigued. We have a favorable breeze, and nothing at present to give us any alarm.'

"I felt strangely uneasy, even while he was speaking; but I kept my fears to myself, and taking up the Bible, he began to read a chapter, as was his custom before retiring for the night—for neither, many sea-captains, your grandfather was a religious man. The chapter for this occasion happened to be the fourth book of Job; and had just finished the words, 'Remember, I pray thee, who ever perished, being innocent? or where were the righteous cut off?' when he was suddenly interrupted by the shout, 'Sail ho!'

"'Sail ho!'

"Where away?' he shouted, as he dropped the book and rushed on deck, leaving me trembling with fear, but standing where I was, with the sacred words he had just read.

"'Close on our weather beam!' I heard a voice reply.

"There was a quick movement of feet on deck; and while I sat holding my breath with fear, there rang out upon the still air the sharp reports of a volley of shrapnel, followed by the gruff, savage hail:

"'Ship ahoy!'

"'Hello!' was the answer.

"'Heave to, and let us send a boat aboard, or we'll riddle you with a broadside, and be to you!'

Then came several quick orders, a hurried tramping of feet on deck, the rattling of cordage, the flapping of sails, and then a death-like silence.

"'Oh, God!' I groaned, covering my face with my hands.

"And then those sublime and beautiful words rung in my ears and strengthened my fainting spirit:

"'Remember, I pray thee, who ever perished, being innocent? or where were the righteous cut off?'

"I heard a step upon the stairs. I looked up and saw your grandfather slowly descending. His knees quivered, and his face was deadly pale. He spoke, but in a quavering tone:

"'Anna, my dear wife,' he said, as he rushed forward and threw his arms around me, 'your worst fears are confirmed—we are in the hands of pirates. For myself, I could die like a man; but you! you! oh, my God! you!' and sinking heavily upon a seat, he groaned like one in pain.

"'I will not give up,' he said, after a moment or two—the poor, weak, timid woman was to change places with the strong, courageous man. 'William,' I said, calmly and firmly, and feeling a calm, lofty thrill of security and protection pass through me like falling and shielding drops: 'William, in our hour of trouble, remember the sacred promises of the Lord—'Who ever perished, being innocent? or where were the righteous cut off?'

"Then those

are innocent,
and none are
righteous,' he
replied,
gloomily; 'for
all perish, the
lamb as well
as the wolf. It
is over with
now. We can
scarcely ex-
pect the
wretches to
spare, for they
have run up
the black flag,
and their mot-
to is, 'Dead men tell no tales.' There! hark! I
even now they are hurrying
up! Oh, my
God! my God!
but, I cannot
leave you be-
low. I have to
doom a thou-
sand times worse than death—this is the fear that pierces my very soul! Oh, merciful God! have mercy upon us!'

"There was now a fearful noise on deck—angry words, blasphemy, fierce oaths, and blasphemous oaths. I arose and stood before my husband, like a rock—momentarily calm in that moment of terrible peril.

"Three or four men, frightful looking fellows, armed with pistols and cutlasses, appeared descending the stairs.

"'Ho! ho! what have we here?' said the foremost, in a gruff, rather good-natured tone, laughing. 'A woman, as I live! This will be a prize for the men, who always take the women for a part of his share.'

"'Send your captain here,' said I, with a calm firmness that surprised myself.

"'All in good time, my beauty! You'll see him soon enough. Come, we've got no time to spare!' he added, putting a pistol to your grandfather's head.

"'Will no amount of ransom save our lives?' asked your grandfather.

"'No, we don't do business that way. So up with you, or I'll scatter your brains where you stand, and they might soil the lady's dress!'

"'Farewell, my wife!' said your grandfather, in a choking voice, as he threw his arms around me and pressed me passionately fourteen times to mine. 'Let your hope save you from despair!' he whispered, as he tore himself away.

"O, my dear child, it was a terrible moment; but still I was resigned, and my soul was filled with reassuring words of the Lord were still ringing in my ears.

"'Men,' said I, 'you have had mothers and sisters, perhaps wives and children, and still live in your inner hearts must beat some feelings of human sympathy. Oh, by all these, I implore you, a subject you not to stain your hands with the blood of those who have never done you harm. I am a daughter, a sister, a wife, a mother, appeal to you for mercy! I do not ask you to spare the lives of you will, but let us escape with life!'

"'Ho! ho! by the holy Virgin, a spokesman, who was the second in command; 'you talk like a book, and I'm half inclined to heed you.'

"'At least then,' rejoined I, 'before you sacrifice my lives, let me see your captain, for I have something to say to him, by which perhaps I may make it to his interest to spare some of your prisoners.'

"'Ay, ay—that's fair enough!' said the man, as he turned and marched your poor grandfather before him to the deck, leaving me alone, but still upright and resolved to bear my fearful trial. I knew not what I should say to the pirate captain—it seemed as if I only spoke as God gave me for something to interpose and save us.

"In a minute or so quick steps ascended the stairs, and a voice said, impatiently:

"'What is it, men? what is it? I am the captain of the pirate, at your service.'

"I was standing with my features in shadow, but the light fell clearly upon his. Years had passed away since I had seen him, but memory and strife—time I had looked upon that face; but through the heavy beard, the lines of care and pleasure, the scars of battle, the knitted brow, the fierce eyes, the deep furrows of grief, anger, hate and remorse, I recognized the same youth who had once sued for my hand.

"'Walter Crawford!' I said, in the same Mervain who stands before you.'

"He started and recoiled, as if struck a heavy blow, and then catching hold of me, and drawing me to the light, he looked eagerly